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GEMSTONE PUBLISHING
June 2003 • No. 103

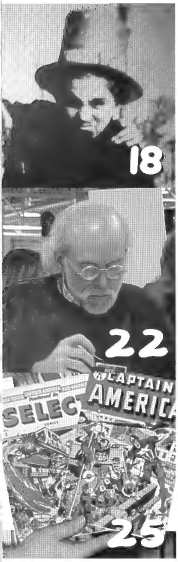
DISNEY COMICS ARE BACK AGAIN!

A HISTORY OF DISNEY COMIC BOOKS
by David Gerstein

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

A GEMSTONE PUBLICATION

Vol. 3 No. 103 June 2003



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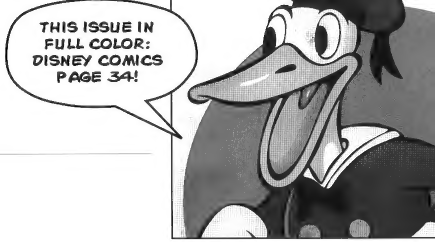

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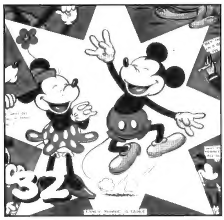

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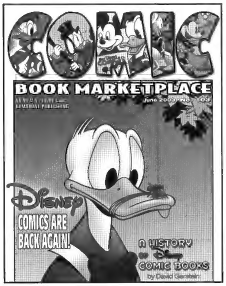

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Marketplace Mail

CBM reserves the right to edit letters selected for publication for length and/or content. Send communications to: Comic Book Marketplace, PO Box 469, West Plains, MO 65775, or e-mail us at cbm@gemstonepub.com.

Statue? (Yes, that me)

I just wanted to thank you for forwarding to me the article that Rod Matlack sent in regards to the Steve Canyon statue in Idaho Springs, Colorado. The article by Marty Jones from the *Denver Post*, February 16, 1997, was enlightening reading and really pretty neat.

I knew that I remembered seeing that statue many years ago, but didn't know the full story. Are there other statues in the U.S. that are based on comic strip or comic book characters? *Superman* and *Charlie Brown* come to mind (where are those?). Probably, there are others, but where?

Perhaps other readers of *CBM* could be on the lookout for them and articles in their local papers about them. Could be fairly interesting to find out.

Thanks again to Rod Matlack for sending the article. I appreciate finding out.

Steve Fears
Oklahoma City, OK

I recall that there is a life-size statue of Popeye in Crystal City, Texas. Readers! Do you know of any others? What about the statue of Russ Cochran in West Plains, Missouri—does that qualify?

RC

Gleason gleanings

I guess the time it took me to answer your e-mail should give a realistic clue about my time constraints. That is too bad, because a "Lev Gleason" issue would be my dream magazine to work on.

My first Golden Age comic was Lev's *Daredevil* #19. I acquired it from a dealer in Manhattan when I was barely a teen. I have collected all of the Lev publications with a vengeance ever since, completing my runs of *Daredevil* and *Boy* in 2001 (I am still missing some *Crime Does Not Pay*, and the pre-Gleason purchase *Silver Streak*). I have interviewed various people over the years about the Gleason publications and the major players. Hell, I went and visited Irving Place just to see where Bob Wood had killed his girlfriend. (FYI: Bob was already "washed up" by the time he murdered his girlfriend. Check the dates!) I interviewed Bob Fujitani about Bob visiting him after he got out, and I have known Joe Simon for years. Fuje ghosted a portfolio for Wood after he got out, and Joe came up with excuses to pay him.

I would love to point out some of the common myths about the early Lev Gleason stuff. For example: The *Dark Horse* publication *Comics Between the Panels* tells the old story about a bunch of artists trapped in a hotel trying to make a deadline for a first issue, they cite *Daredevil Comics* #1 and show a picture of *DD Battles Hitler* [which is *DD* #1]. Those artists were working on *Daredevil* #2. To all concerned, that was the first issue.

Then there are fascinating anomalies like the *Big Book of Boy Comics*, a large hardbound *Boy Comics* one-shot. It turns out it was actually a way to recycle returned issues—pull off the covers and re-bind them as is?!! It is *fascinating*. Charles Biro may have been a womanizing alcoholic—but he was a great innovator (I would guess this was his brainchild to please his boss).

Marc (dealing with work, two children under 5 and APAs) Svensson
via e-mail

Pulpier roots

Recently, I picked up your 100th issue at my local comic bookstore, Bob's Comics, because I noticed the colorful cover. I have been reading the entire issue and finding all of the information very interesting. In particular, the article "The Pulp Roots of Batman" by Will Murray caught my attention as I had just finished reading Bob Kane's 1989 autobiography *Batman and Me*. I wanted to point out a slight error in Mr. Murray's article. In his article he indicates that neither Bob Kane nor Bill Finger ever mentioned The Bat in citing influences in the creation of Batman. I would like to point out that in Chapter 4 (pg. 43 in particular) Bob Kane addresses this issue. And again on pg. 104 he indicates the possibility that The Bat might have played a part in the inspiration of the story of Batman's origin and relates the similarity of the two stories. Otherwise I found your magazine very entertaining and informative. Keep up the good work and I might just pick up more issues in the future!

Greg Milewski
Warren, MI

My memory lapse. I had forgotten that Kane addressed this issue in passing. The reason he did so was that I interviewed him more than once and had shared The Bat/Batman similarities with him. It was all news to him he told me. Kane suggested any influence was via Bill Finger. Since the origin similarities were so striking, Kane must have felt the need to mention this in Batman and Me, *lest someone accuse him of copying The Bat. So not only did I know about this, I caused it!*

Will

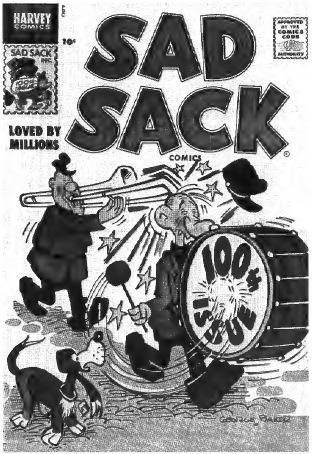
Greg, you are an example of exactly what we need more of at CBM*—a new reader! We seem to be losing some of our subscribers because of some of the new directions we are exploring, and we need all the new buyers and subscribers we can find! Stay tuned!*

RC

To Michelle Nolan

I was a bit slow getting this off to you, but here's one of the special 100th issues you hadn't seen at the time of your article in the March *CBM*. I don't have any of the others you mentioned.

Robert F. Palko
Reading, PA



A big thank you

Although it's a little late, congratulations on 100 issues of *CBM*! I first found *CBM* on the rack around #7 and I was immediately impressed. I was in the middle of starting my own fanzine and called Gary Carter for advice. Gary was nicer than I had hoped, he offered advice as well as offering to send out a couple of back issues to see what I thought. He also suggested that I write a letter letting him know. Before long I had written several letters, then a few opinion pieces, then I was invited to join in on round table discussions, then articles, and finally I had my own ongoing column "Second Time Around."

During this time Gary, his lovely wife Lisa and Mike Naiman would always take my numerous phone calls concerning an article, or even personal matters. Over the years I grew to feel that they had become close friends of mine even though we had only met in person once or twice. Years later I would join and hold office for the AACC, an organization that reflected the hard work and love of the hobby that *CBM*, the Carters and Mike Naiman had shared with me. I really believe that *CBM* was the voice of fandom during those years and I can honestly say that I never enjoyed collecting or being involved with fandom more than during those years because of Gary, Lisa and Mike.

It's not often that someone gets a chance to say thanks, and if the Carters or Mike Naiman are reading this, "Thanks for everything." As it stands now I don't collect comics anymore—times change, things change and people change. I hope that *CBM* under the editorial direction of you, Russ, will create as many wonderful memories for your current readers and contributors as the original staff did for me! Good Luck,

Shawn Hamilton
via e-mail

Atlas recovered

Having been an avid comic collector in my youth, I became involved again in the early '90s, initially by buying Gemstone's EC reprints, and then becoming a regular reader of *Comic Book Marketplace*. Through Pat Calhoun's articles, I also began to formulate an interest in Atlas comics.

As a consequence, I realized that a substantial amount of post-Code Atlas mystery material had been reprinted in black and white by the Alan Class company in the UK. These 64-page compilations of diverse American material were widely available from the '60s until the early '90s, and were still available in second-hand magazine shops and comic marts at reasonable prices.

Reasoning that this would be a relatively cheap way of putting together an Atlas collection of sorts, I accumulated a fairly large amount before realizing that this was a poor substitute for the real thing. So it was that I turned my attention to browsing dealers' catalogs and attending comic marts in search of Atlas mystery and war comics.

It was on purchasing *Astonishing* #50 that I realized that the cover didn't look quite right. On comparison, the character being menaced by the naked arm on the Alan Class cover has an expression of terror on his face and his right arm flung up before him. On the Atlas cover, the arm has acquired a jacket, shirt, wristwatch and ring, while the man against the wall has lost his arm and turned his head, which now wears an expression of mild surprise.

The question was, had the changes been made by Atlas or Alan Class. The latter seemed doubtful, as Alan Class was (as far as I am aware) simply a repackaging operation without the editorial capacity to make extensive changes to existing cover art in such a professional fashion. In an attempt to further prove

[continued on page 8]

Marketplace Mail

(continued from page 7)

this hypothesis, I compared other Alan Class covers with their Atlas counterparts.

With *Astonishing* #48, I became convinced that the Alan Class covers were the originals. The difference between the two covers is slight but crucial. I'm not sure who the cover artist is, but I am sure that the central character's head on the Atlas cover is a paste-over, possibly by Carl Burgos, which jars stylistically and visually with the rest of the art. The head on the Alan Class cover is compatible with the style and composition.

Other anomalies are as follows:

Astonishing #44 – A pair of mysterious and particularly pointless gloves disappear before publication.

Journey into Mystery #48 – One of the gloves re-appears on the hand on the doorknob.

Journey Into Unknown Worlds #53 – The facial expressions on the characters have changed and the shadow on the wall has been toned down in appearance.

Spellbound #29 – Joe Maneely's lovingly rendered basement clutter is blacked-out on the published cover, possibly because it was felt that it distracted attention from the character coming through the wall.

There may be other examples. Isolating them among the hundreds of issues of the various Alan Class titles would be a daunting prospect, not to say an expensive one.

As to the question of why these unaltered covers came to see print on UK comics, I can only conjecture that plates of the interior art and the original cover art were shipped to the UK, any amendments to the covers having been made to stats of the original art. The art was then, presumably, disposed of.

Alan Class also reprinted issues of many of the Marvel hero titles. It would be interesting to compare the cover art of these issues with their American counterparts.

Frank Wilmot
England

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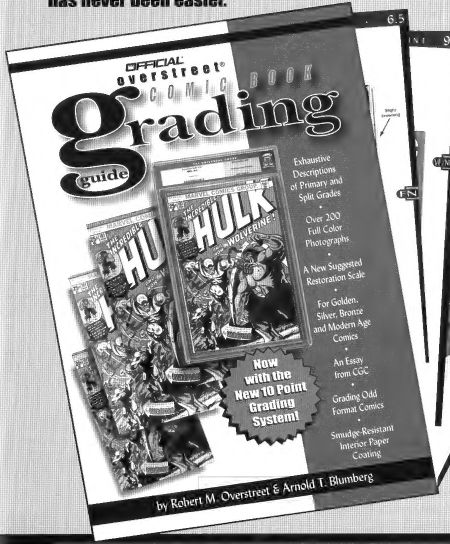
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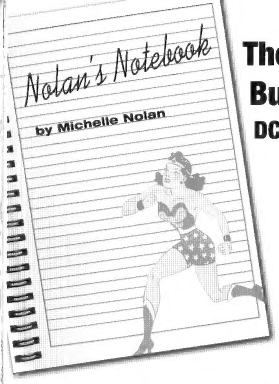

The Girl of 1,000 Gimmicks—But Only 10 Stories

DC's Last Golden Age Hero Didn't Last Long

The Black Canary wasn't the only DC Comics heroine who eased a long-running hero out of his own comic strip near the end of the Golden Age.

In fact, contrary to what many fans have believed, she wasn't even DC's last Golden Age costumed hero.

That distinction goes to a truly obscure character few fans have ever seen or even heard of, not that they have missed too much. *Merry, the Girl of a Thousand Gimmicks*, appeared in only ten stories before she vanished forever (except, perhaps, for some obscure later references that only the most truly anal-retentive DC continuity buffs could appreciate).

Merry was a little like a much more light-hearted version of the long-running Golden Age characterization of the *Green Arrow*—always with an unbelievable, improbable, what-in-the-world trick up her sleeve (or usually in her cape).

DC, then called National Comics, introduced only two "modern time" traditional costumed heroes in the years after the end of World War II—Black Canary and Merry. They were, in fact, among the last of a handful of heroes introduced near the end of the Golden Age by all the publishers combined.

Black Canary—who debuted in the Johnny Thunder strip in *Flash Comics* #86 (Aug 1947)—not only was a Golden Age success, even joining the Justice Society of America for its final 20 adventures, but also built a significant place for herself and her progeny in the Silver Age and beyond.

Not so Merry, later also known as the Gimmick Girl. The red-headed teenager had only four stories under her own logo, running as a little-remembered, seldom-seen 7-page backup feature in *Star Spangled* #87 (Dec 1948) through #90 (Mar 1949). Merry's story began in the Star-Spangled Kid story in *Star Spangled* #81 (Jun 1948) and, amazingly, she made solo appearances in three stories (#84-86) under the logo of the Star-Spangled Kid, who was nowhere to be found in costume in those tales.

By the way, in the department of spelling inconsistencies, DC hyphenated the hero's name in his logo but not always in his stories. Meanwhile, the logo of the comic book was not hyphenated. The mind boggles.

Merry's ten tales, all 7-pagers, contained much of the improbable whimsy that made Fawcett's *Mary Marvel* so charming in the 1940s. That was no surprise because the prolific Otto Binder, who penned so many fun-filled stories for Fawcett, apparently wrote all ten of Merry's appearances.

By the time Merry came along, DC's editors were a little more than a year along in their experiment with Robin the Boy Wonder stories in an attempt to bolster what seems to have been flagging circulation for *Star Spangled Comics*. DC dumped the long-running Newsboy Legion and their costume hero pal The

STAR SPANGLED COMICS
GOSH! I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CAREFUL..!
LOSING TRACK OF THE CROOKS, MERRY VISITS BACKSTAGE...
THE THREE DAREDEVILS
THIS IS THE NEAREST PRESSING ROOM! WONDER IF THEY TRIED TO HIDE IN HERE!
NO! ONLY THE DAREDEVILS HERE!
OH EXCUSE ME!
THE CROOKS GOT AWAY! BUT WHAT'S THIS? IS TWINKLE TOES HURT?
GRAB'M! I'LL KEEP YOU TOO, IN YOUR PRESSING ROOM!
I'M YOUR MANAGER AND I HATE TO SAY IT, KID—BUT YOU CAN'T SKATE FOR A WEEK OR MORE!
BUT THEN I'LL LOSE MY CONTRACT! BOO-HOO!
OVERHEARING THIS, MERRY COMES TO A SWIFT DECISION!
HMM, THAT GIRL ENDED UP ALONE! SHE'S GOT A LOCK ON HER PLACE, I'D BE HELPING HER—AND I'D ALSO HAVE A CHANCE TO SOLVE THIS MYSTERY OF THE ROBBERY!

Page from the Merry story in **Star Spangled** #87 (Dec 1948).

STAR SPANGLED COMICS
BUT MEANWHILE, IN PRISON...
I WILL CONTACT THE SUPERMAN TREASURY VIA "RADIO"!
ATTENTION, SUPERMAN! I AM CAPTAIN MARVEL! I AM IN THIS PRISON!
COME AND RESCUE ME!
WE WILL SMASH THE EARTHLING PRISON! ARM TO THE TEETH, MAN THE BATTLE TANK!
MERRY MAKES USE OF HER RESPITE...
FREE! THE ONLY THING I'M GOING TO DO IS USE A KNIFE TO CUT THE NET OPEN!
OUTSIDE, THE MARTIANS PREPARE TO RAID THE CITY WITH A FORMIDABLE WAR MACHINE...
TEST THE DISINTEGRATOR CANNON! BLAST THAT TREE!
S-GOLLY! I'VE GOT TO STOP THEM FROM RAIDING THE CITY WITH THAT HORRIBLE MACHINE!
LOOK, I'M ARMED! CAN'T CATCH ME!
SEIZE HER ALIVE! WE NEED HER FOR FURTHER EXPERIMENTS!

The silliest story in DC history!! **Star Spangled** #89 (Feb 1949).

Guardian after *Star Spangled* #64 (Jan 1947) in favor of beginning Robin's solo adventures with #65 (Feb 1947).

As Robin thus was gaining exposure in a fourth regular DC comic book—one more than Batman!—The Star-Spangled Kid and his adult partner, Stripesy, continued their long-running series of adventures. *Star Spangled Comics*, in fact, was less an anthology in its first six issues in 1941-42 than it was a showcase for the new title's red-white-and-blue duo, who appeared in three stories in #1 (Oct 1941) and #6 (Mar 1942) and two full-length tales in #2 through #5. When the Newsboy Legion/Guardian and Robotman came along in *Star Spangled* #7 (Apr 1942), however, no character in the comic ever again had more than one story, matching the style of DC's other seven monthly anthology

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775M2	7 3/4 x 10 3/4	Silver/Gold Comics - 1950's-70's	$11.50	$38.00	$165.00
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titles.

The Star-Spangled Kid and Stripesy apparently were so popular that DC also found a place for them during wartime in issues of *World's Finest Comics* (#6-18), along with membership in the Seven Soldiers of Victory in the wartime issues of *Leading Comics* (#1-14) before that title became a humor comic. The Star-Spangled Kid and Stripesy were full-fledged DC stars for a while.

The patriotically themed pair, however, were reduced to fighting mostly common criminals in post-war *Star Spangled* stories, and were clearly on their way out by 1948 along with several long-running DC costume heroes. The hints were everywhere in *Star Spangled Comics.*

Not only was the Newsboy Legion discontinued, but DC soon also abandoned the nicely done patriotic heroine Liberty Belle (The All-American Girl) in #68 so that Tomahawk could join the DC universe in #69 (Jun 1947). Then it was Robotman's turn to give way to the sea detective Captain Compass, who debuted in #83 (Aug 1948). At least Robotman survived for a few more years by being transferred to *Detective Comics.*

But the way DC disposed of the Star-Spangled Kid and Stripesy was unique, indeed. In fact, few costumed characters ever eased their way into a strip the way Merry did.

STAR SPANGLED COMICS
MERRY
THE GIRL OF A THOUSAND GIMMICKS!
YOU HAVE ALL HEARD OF MERRY THE GIMMICK GIRL AND HER VALIANT FIGHT AGAINST CRIME! BUT WHO IS GIMMICK GUY? THERE ARISES A MYSTERY WHICH IN A CURIOUS CHALLENGE TO THE CLEVER MIND, PITTING HER OWN SPECIAL TRICKS AGAINST HERS! WHO WILL WIN OUT IN THIS BATTLE OF WITS AND WITS? WE GIVE YOU THE BATTLE OF THE CENTURY IN...
"The Duel of the Gimmicks!"
ALL THROUGH THE AGES, THE LURE OF GOLD HAS DRAWN GREEDY MEN, AND EVEN TODAY...
COME ON! WE'LL BE RICH! PROSPECTIN'
GOLD
BOOM...
HE'S STRUCK IT RICH, LETS GO!
The last Merry story from **Star Spangled** #90 (Mar 1949).

Merry began by being adopted by Sylvester Pemberton, Sr., the father of the Star-Spangled Kid's mild-mannered alter-ego, Sylvester Pemberton, Jr. (surely one of the great secret identities of all time). When a bullet grazes the Star-Spangled Kid in #81 in the story entitled "The Human Fly," father sends his son to a psychiatrist when he can't explain his head wound. The psychiatrist advised the adoption of a sibling, and thus Merry Creamer—the abandoned daughter of an ex-con named Fly-foot Creamer—is adopted out of an orphanage to become a Pemberton, much to Sylvester Junior's shock, unease and general befuddlement.

Late in the story, the Star-Spangled Kid and Stripesy save themselves from electrocution while pursing Fly-Foot during a crime, thanks to a silk handkerchief that was a gift from Merry. But when the news got out to Merry, that rescue revealed their secret identities to her, courtesy of the monogrammed silk handkerchief. And we all know what happens when a costume hero's secret identity is revealed, don't we?

Having "worked on a costume for the past two weeks," as Merry mysteriously explains to the reader before embarking on her first adventure—"Crimes by Magic" in #82—she appears in costume in a whopping five panels to help the patriotic duo bring to justice a crooked magician. There was no explanation of why she created her costume, nor any details as to whether she had a background in athletics or detective work. Just one instant costumed heroine!

The Star-Spangled Kid didn't know it, but his last appearance in costume would take place in #83 in "The Adventure of The Rope." The Rope was yet another in an endless series of costumed villains that DC created as foils for its heroes during the Golden Age. In trying to catch The Rope, Stripesy sustains a broken leg in a fall. "But don't worry about me! I'll be out hobbling around in good shape before you know it," he tells all three Pembertons—but was never seen in comic books again.

The Rope manages to knock out The Kid, but Merry saves the story with her tricks—a wind siren, a jack-in-the-box punch, a bubble-blower and a fake "Indian rope trick." If this sounds less than underwhelming, well, it was only seven pages—and Merry appeared in only a few panels.

The Rope returns in #84, but the Star-Spangled Kid does not, other than his logo. The Pemberton men take off on a deep-sea fishing voyage in the first panel—"This trip's not for a girl, Dad? Is it, Sis?" Junior asks. So much for male chauvinism—we never see him again in costume. That has to be one of the strangest fadeouts in super-hero history! And when The Rope escapes from jail, then plots to steal the cash bandied about in an acting contest, Merry tricks him by dressing up as Snow White and crashing a giant "apple" on his head. Throughout the entire story, Merry appears in six panels—meaning that in her first four stories, her costumed appearances have amounted to less than three pages.

Merry helps to rescue a gun-shy movie cowboy and his star horse, Smoke (#85), which was really her first full story. Continuing her tour of the West in "Crime Goes on the Warpath" in #86, *[continued on page 17]*

Mike Wieringo on His Main Inspiration in Comics

Interview by Bill Baker

Whether it's for his work on The Flash *series with Bill Messner-Loebs for DC, his take on* Spider-Man *for Marvel, the series* Tellos *which he created with Todd Dezago, or any one of the large handful of the other books he's worked on, Mike Wieringo has always been known as an illustrator with a passion for exciting visuals, a real penchant for capturing believably the wide variety of emotions required by the script, and crystal clear storytelling. So it should come as no surprise that his latest gig, penciling Mark Waid's scripts for Marvel's flagship title,* Fantastic Four, *has captured the attention of fans old and new alike.*

What did come as a surprise, albeit a pleasant and timely one, was who 'Ringo cites as the major reason for his work in, and undying love of, comics.

Comic Book Marketplace: What got you interested in comics? Was there a specific issue, or title, or an artist that grabbed your attention while growing up?

Mike Wieringo: Well, actually my father collected comic books, so he's really the guy [that got me into it]. It wasn't so much an artist, or certain comic book, that got me into the medium. It was more my father. He was a big 1960s Marvel fan. He had all the Jack Kirby stuff and a lot of the DC stuff. He was really into the weird fantasy, weird science fiction stuff that DC was doing, and the western stuff that Marvel was doing at the time. I wasn't all that much into that, but I would read what he had.

He was in the Army stationed in Germany, and he used to buy comic books from the newsstand on base. And this is when I was, like, eight, nine and ten, and I'd read the comics that he had. Of course, I didn't have money to buy my own. So he's really the guy who got

me interested in comics.

I guess when we got back in the United States—if you want to know what the first thing [was] that ever caught my eye when I started having an allowance and enough money to buy my own comics—it was the stuff that Marvel was doing in the mid-'70s. The very first comic book I bought off the newsstand was *X-Men* #104. Dave Cockrum, Chris Claremont-Dave Cockrum stuff. I guess I was never really very much into the more illustrative stuff, like Neal Adams, and the more detailed, more realistic-oriented stuff. So, when I saw the art of guys like Dave Cockrum and John Byrne's early stuff, that just really [spoke to me]. It was more open, more cartoony, more expressive, more fluid, more bouncy. That kind of thing just really caught my eye. I was just *totally* in love with Dave Cockrum's work on *The X-Men*. His costume designs, and he drew the most beautiful women. His stuff was just fantastic.

I guess Dave Cockrum and John Byrne were my first big inspirations as far as wanting to draw. I used to trace their stuff. All little kids would lie on the floor, and put a piece of paper over their artwork, and I would trace covers, and trace panels and stuff like that. So I guess those two guys were my first big loves in comics.

And I was also really into the *Captain Marvel* stuff that Marvel was doing at the time. The first *Captain Marvel* I bought was *Captain Marvel* #50, and that was Al Milgrom, I think. And his stuff was a little different from the other guys, but [I still liked it]. I was just really into that mid-'70s Marvel reinvigoration, ya know, when they were really doing the stuff that most of us grew up with. Everybody *loves* the Claremont and Byrne *X-Men* stuff, and the Claremont-Cockrum *X-Men* stuff, and that's when I started getting into comics, and really started enjoying them for myself.

Bill, Mike and the entire staff at CBM *would like to thank all of the wonderful fathers out there for their unflagging support, timely advice, and—Hey, let's just say it!—love. Happy Father's Day all!*

The Man Behind the Mouse...and Ducks

Editor in Chief John Clark on Gemstone's Disney books

Interview by Bill Baker

Even for those of us who are privy to the behind-the-scenes magic that makes comics appear each and every week, it's sometimes easy to forget that there are people who are just as important as the artist and writer when it comes to the creation of the actual comic book. Sure, it could be argued that an editor's job mainly consists of shuffling paper in an efficient and timely manner, but the fact of the matter is that editors, even the most hands-off of them, have an undeniable and deep effect, for good or ill, upon the content and quality of every book they shepherd through the publishing mill. An editor can make or break a title, and this is just as true for creator owned books as it is for company or licensee owned properties—perhaps even more so when considering the latter.

Which brings us to John Clark, the man who's responsible for overseeing the new line of Disney books from Gemstone. A long-time veteran of the comics and licensing business, he's heading up the effort to reintroduce the American public to "Uncle Walt's" beloved stable of characters...and make it stick. After reading the following, I'm sure you'll agree with my own hard-thought conclusion: that the Disney characters and the comics they'll be appearing in couldn't be in more capable, caring, or trustworthy hands.

Bill Baker: Well John, while you're editing this new Gemstone line of Disney books, this isn't the first time you've been involved with these properties, is it?

John Clark: No. Actually, I came over to Gemstone from a previous position with Gladstone Comics in Arizona, where I took over the title of Editor in Chief after the original editor, Byron Erickson left. That would have been approximately 1990 or so.

Baker: So you've got a few years under your belt doing this, so to speak.

Clark: Yeah. I've actually been working with Disney, and with Disney licensing, in various aspects since 1982, so we're talking about a little over 20 years.

Baker: What are some of the special difficulties presented by this particular position?

Clark: In contrast to an editor at, for example, DC or Marvel where you're actually working with characters that your company owns... when you're working with Disney characters, or for that matter any licensed character, you have to pay a lot more attention to the feelings and the desires of the person or the organization you license them from—and pay a lot of attention to what type of persona they want to project onto the buying public for their various characters. In Disney's case, they're particularly concerned that Mickey Mouse, their signature character, not be presented in any story in a bad light. So you need to keep that kind of thing in mind.

To that end, what we do with Disney—and, again, this is not unique to Disney; this is what you'd do with any licensed product—is try to send in advance copies of stories, and story lines, so they can have an early look at them and just try to catch anything [they might want changed] early on.

And as we proceed through production, they have a look at the finished art, in black and white, and in color, and actually get to sign off on everything. What makes that a little bit different from, again, a DC or Marvel editorship, is your production schedule gets pushed a lot farther out in time, and we tend to work six, seven months ahead.

Baker: One of the other interesting aspects of your particular position is that you're not just dealing with new material, but also have an enormous backlog of previously produced stories to draw from. Now, on the surface, that would seem to make your job easier. Would that in fact be the case, or is it a little more complicated in reality than it might first appear?

Clark: Yeah, the backlog of material is daunting, and we have just stacks—literally stacks—of European proofs of stories that have been produced by Egmont over in Denmark, Oberon in Holland, Topolino in Italy, and Hachette in France. We have stacks and stacks and stacks of proofs to go through to choose stories from.

The fact that the stories are already plotted and drawn certainly makes things easier from the aspect of having less stories to produce. As far as the actual production work of putting the book together, it's about the same. What I'm doing is pretty much what any company would do once they get the finished art in the can.

A somewhat different aspect of it is that all of these [European] stories are obviously written in foreign languages—a language other than English—and we receive them either translated or not translated. Some of the stories that we get in that are not translated have to go out to translators who will translate them and put them into American idiom, or else just give us a straight translation, then we hire somebody else to put them into American idiom. But even those stories, such as the Danish stories, that always come to us translated into English [can be problematic because]

they were translated into English by someone who, though they speak English quite well, is not using English as their primary language. So you get scripts, again, that need to be rewritten into American English.

Baker: As far as new stories, what might be some of the things we have to look forward to in the future, and what kind of balance will there be between this new, unseen material and the older stories?

Clark: Well, if by *new* you mean stories that we contract for and produce exclusively here, we are going to be doing almost 100% reprint stories from Europe for at least the first year, probably a little bit more than the first year, just to get the publishing under our belt, and get everything underway. In fact, there's so much good material available to us from Europe right now that, from an economic standpoint, there's really no need for us to produce any new material. We could go for virtually years using this excellent material.

Also, artists that Gladstone originally started using, such as Don Rosa and William Van Horn, are working for Egmont now. So there's really a vast backlog of Don Rosa stories that can be reprinted that have never been seen in the English language, and a vast backlog of William Van Horn stories that have never been seen in the English language.

So that's pretty much what we're going to do, at least for the first year. They will be reprints, but they'll be new stories for the American audience. These will be stories that have not been printed in English anywhere until now.

Baker: That must be a bit exciting to be able to tap into that kind of reservoir of good storytelling.

Clark: Yes, it really is. As I say, we're going to be dealing with truly the fan favorites. We're going to be dealing with Don Rosa. We're going to be dealing with William Van Horn. We're going to be reprinting the stories that Pat and Shelly Block either wrote, or wrote and drew, for Egmont. You know, these are all people who were at one time producing stories directly for the American market. But, obviously, when the American market dried up, people went elsewhere. And we have that backlog to draw on now.

About the only new material that I am buying right now is covers. If there's a specific story that I want a cover drawn for, then I'll go to Van Horn, or Rosa, or Block, and ask them to draw that cover for me.

Baker: What are some of the different ingredients that make for a good Disney book or collection?

Clark: Well, for the first books that we're coming out with—which are the $6.95 perfect bound, prestige format, 64-page books—I'm trying to aim these primarily at the Disney collectors market and, as such, give them what I believe they're looking for so far as a nice, balanced collection. So that would include in *Uncle Scrooge* a story by Rosa in most issues, and/or a story by Van Horn, and then it would probably be filled out with a vintage [Carl] Barks reprint. Something that hasn't been reprinted in the States for ten years or longer. And then a collection of some of the better European stories drawn by Daniel Branca or Vicar.

In *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*, primarily Van Horn, Rosa when there's a non-Scrooge Rosa story available, and, again, we'll try to get into some of the better European stories. In *Comics and Stories* I can tap into some of the Mickey Mouse stories from Europe. Some of them are quite nice. Caesar Ferioli and William Van Horn's son, Noel Van Horn, are doing very nice versions of a vintage-looking Mickey, and real nice stories are being produced over there by Byron Erickson, and by American writers such as Pat McGreal, Dave Ross, Don Markstein and Michael T. Gilbert—a lot of good American talent.

Baker: What's the best aspect of this job, as far as you're concerned?

Clark: Being back into the Disney scene, it's fun to be back here. Plus, it's fun to be producing the books again.

You know, I never really have too much of a perspective on how much people like these books until I get out into the public, attending the San Diego convention and the like, and have so many people tell me how much they do appreciate them coming out, and that's really gratifying.

Baker: Do you think you'll be making con appearances in the near future?

Clark: I will be at the San Diego convention this year. As a matter of fact, Gary Leach, my Art Director, and Susan Daigle-Leach, my production manager, and myself will all be at the San Diego convention.

Baker: What do you hope that the fans of the Disney books get from this work? Are you in a real sense, trying to recapture some folks' childhoods, and set the tone for a whole new generation of Disney fans?

Clark: Yes, basically. For the existing fans, obviously what they're going to get out of it is to have American Disney comic books that they can buy, and read, and enjoy again. But, beyond that, what I'm really hoping to do is to introduce the Disney characters, and the Disney comic books, and demonstrate what high quality Disney comic books are to a newer generation of readers. I'm talking about readers who have possibly grown up not ever seeing the Disney comic books. Readers who have grown up thinking that comic books are just superhero stuff, or horror, or action-adventure stuff.

To that end, after the prestige books come out, in September we're releasing two 32-page newsstand format titles, *Donald Duck and Friends* and *Mickey Mouse and Friends*, that we're hoping will actually bring younger readers into the fold, and reestablish a newer readership. That's my true mission. Without a new influx of younger readers, we, and comics in general, are doomed to extinction. And that would be a pity.

Nolan's Notebook

[continued from page 12]

she again performs solo even though the logo was still "The Star-Spangled Kid." She does get a little credit with a small circle under the logo. She befriends an Indian girl and eventually disguises herself as an Indian girl to set up the capture of the villain.

In this unorthodox way, Merry gradually saw her role increased in her first six appearances, which was about the only logical aspect of the entire series. It is, however, light-hearted fun, of the type seldom seen in DC Comics when they embarked on much more seriously written and even more seriously drawn early 1950s issues. DC, however, didn't take Merry very seriously, either, while bannering Captain Compass above the logo in #84-89. Merry, the Girl of a Thousand Gimmicks, never received any sort of plug on the cover or in the house ads of a DC comic, and what other costumed hero was ever treated in so cavalier a manner?

She finally received her own logo in #87, lettered in the familiar style of Superboy, complete with "The Girl of a Thousand Gimmicks" in a scroll below the logo. In the four Merry stories with logos, there is no mention whatsoever of The Star-Spangled Kid, or even his alter-ego. It's as though he never existed!

In "Crime on Ice," she disguises herself as an ice-skater to capture the bad guys, who turn out to be three daredevils dressing in, well, red devil costumes! It was the third consecutive story in which this costumed heroine disguised herself in a different sort of costume—surely some sort of record.

In *Star Spangled* #88 (Jan 1949), Robin's solo format is temporarily abandoned and he begins a series of seven consecutive full-length appearances with Batman—stories that could have appeared in any of Batman's three regular titles. In this highly collectable issue, Merry encountered her most interesting adventure in "The Girl Who Tried to Be a Boy!" She helps a female cadet who is required to attend a boys' military school—and is forced to play masculine roles because her grandfather was disappointed that she wasn't born a boy—in the best human-interest story of the series. Merry foils criminals at the end with a mirror, self-lighting firecracker and midget wire-recorder, but the real twist is when she convinces the girl, Alice, to dress as her grandmother, convincing her widower grandfather of the error of his ways. This is the only story in the series that really lives up to DC's standards.

Merry's third story, "Marauders from Mars!" in #89, is sheer, unadulterated silliness. Merry battles a batch of comical Gumby-like Martians, who arrive not in a flying saucer but in a round ball. This one has all the whimsy of a Mary Marvel story but without any of the charm. The tricks in this one include a midget fire extinguisher, a wire web, a jackknife, tacks, a magnesium flare, a mechanical boxing glove and a hornet's nest. How this one ever got by the editors is the real mystery! A sillier comic book story may never have appeared in the entire history of the genre.

Merry unwittingly bowed out in #90 against the Gimmick Guy in "The Duel of the Gimmicks!" In this one, she uses a bulletproof glove ("per-mitt me, Mister Crook!" is her Robinesque pun as she then throws the glove to KO him), dusting powder, a spark gun and a punching machine. But the Gimmick Guy escapes and eventually steals her cape, only to find she has loaded it with backfiring gimmicks including a backfiring squirt gun, shocker, rocket firecracker and vest rocket net. Her career ends in the final panel as she fittingly says "Well, that's that!" while reading headlines that read "Gimmick Girl Wins Battle of Gimmicks against Gimmick Guy!"

All ten of these issues of *Star Spangled* are uncommon, although the *Gerber Photo-Journal* inexplicably gives #90 a "4," which is only one step above average scarcity for Golden Age comics. Issues #81, 84, 86 and 89 rate a "6"; #87 rates a "7"; and #82, 83, 85 and 88 rate a "5." All in all, a remarkably tough ten issues to find as a group, especially because of the crossover interest from Batman collectors.

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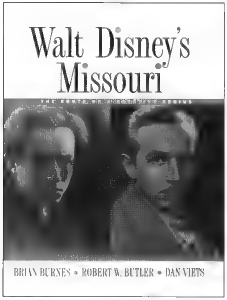


with Dan Viets, Columbia, Missouri, co-author with Brian Burnes and Robert W. Bulter of *Walt Disney's Missouri*, published by Kansas City Star Books.

Interview by Russ Cochran

CBM: We've seen lots of books about Walt Disney and about Walt Disney's life as an artist and influence as a media giant and so on. What is different about this new book?

Dan Viets: This book features a lot of information that none of the prior biographies have had. It benefits from the fact that my co-authors and I live here in Missouri where we have the opportunity to research Missouri-related history to a greater extent than other writers have had.

For instance, the fact that Elias Disney, Walt's father, never owned a *Kansas City Star* distribution business, contrary to every other published biography of Walt Disney. But the truth is—at least on paper—that the distribution business was owned by Roy Disney.

We also researched some things like a story Walt had told that when he was a little boy he had to walk through snowdrifts that were taller than he was to deliver the *Kansas City Star*. And I decided I'd check and see just how much snow Kansas City did have when he was a little boy. Turns out that the very first winter that he spent in Kansas City, 1911-12, Kansas City had more snow than it ever had before or since, continuing to this day to hold the records for a winter season and a single day of snowfall. And so there is almost no doubt that he did in fact walk through snowdrifts that were taller than he was.

We have published the sheet music for one of the films that Walt made—which was essentially a music video—in conjunction with the Jenkins Music Co. in Kansas City. It was a film that was intended to illustrate a popular song of the day called "Martha's Just a Plain Old Fashioned Name." The Disney archives had never seen that sheet music but I found it in the Kansas City Library's archives. And, of course, we also have a lot of new information about Marceline, the place where Walt spent five years of his early childhood, and which had a greater influence on him than any other period of his life.

CBM: So I guess the entire focus of this book is what these early Missouri influences had to do with Walt and how they came out in his later work.

Viets: Not entirely. We certainly do focus on the fifteen years he spent growing up in Missouri. But we also go into greater detail than any other book has about his return visits to the state of Missouri, which continued throughout his entire life. He visited Marceline on several occasions and Kansas City on many occasions.

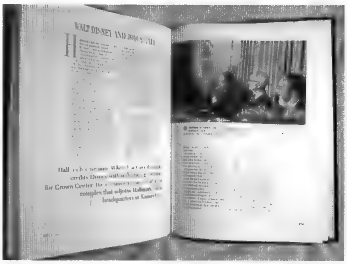
But Disney actually maintained close connections to the state of Missouri throughout his entire life even though he had no relatives here. For instance, he seriously planned to build a theme park in Marceline, and another one in St. Louis, and nothing has been written about the Marceline plan before. The St. Louis project has been touched on but not explored in depth in any other previous books.

CBM: I noticed that this book has three authors of record. Can you tell me how the duties were split up between Brian Burnes, Robert W. Butler, and yourself?

Viets: Butler is the *Kansas City Star*'s movie editor and Burnes is their history specialist. They asked me to work with them because they knew of my research and obsession with Disney's Missouri history. In fact I had planned for some years to do a book on this same theme myself. But when the *Star* came to me and said, "We're going to do this book. Would you like to be a part of it?" I figured I would rather be a part of it than not. And I am pleased that I was.

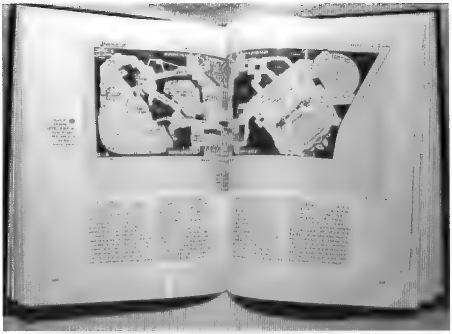
CBM: I found a lot of interesting information in there. You ran down the fact that Walt Disney saw a silent version of the movie *Snow White* twenty years before he produced *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, his first feature film. The early years growing up in Marceline, how did they affect his early cartoons?

Viets: Probably the most obvious influence in the early cartoons is the



Just two months before his death Walt appeared at a United Nations event in Kansas City at the Continental Hotel with Joyce Hall, Sir Bob Hope and ex-president Dwight David Eisenhower. This photograph of the four of them has never been published anywhere before.

rural settings of many of the *Mickey Mouse* and *Silly Symphonies*. Or, for that matter, some of the earlier *Alice* comedies and *Oswald, the Lucky Rabbit* series, but many of those feature a very rural setting. A lot of them are set in barnyards, including *Plane Crazy*. So that's probably the most obvious influence from Marceline days. Walt talked about that himself in later years and about how Marceline was a big influence on the early cartoons. He said one of the things he knew that he got from Marceline was the outhouses they often featured in various gags in the early cartoons.



Blueprints for the St. Louis theme park. This came very close to being the second Disney theme park. It would have been built immediately north of Busch stadium on two blocks that are now being occupied by the Marriott Pavilion Hotel. This park would have been totally enclosed to allow year-round operation. Walt was really looking forward to the fact that they could control the weather and the lighting and the entire environment inside this enclosure.

CBM: I noticed, as most Disney historians know, that Disney was involved with producing cartoons and advertising shorts in a building in Kansas City when he had what he called the Laugh-o-Gram Studios. This building, which is called the McConahy on 31st Street, is where he had his first studio. I know that for years you have been interested in restoring this building and perhaps establishing some sort of a permanent museum to his memory. How is that effort going?

Viets: Well, it's going, it's in progress. In the back of the book you will see some photos of the building as it now appears. Fortunately for us the area of the building that Walt was known to have occupied was, at least partly, still intact. We've erected buttresses that are mounted on three-ton cubes of concrete that were poured and placed on the sidewalk so the thing cannot fall down.

CBM: It can't fall out. Can it fall in?

Viets: No. The city of Kansas City repeatedly threatened to demolish the building even though it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. When I and two friends formed a not-for-profit group and purchased the building about five years ago they gave us a reprieve. They are now willing to give us a little more time to try to raise the money. Walt Disney's daughter Diane and her family administer what is known as the Walt Disney Family Foundation, and they have pledged to match up to $450,000 in funds that we raise.

We are going to install a small theater where we'll show several of the films Walt made here, along with films about Walt's life including one the Disney Family Foundation produced last year. And there is a great film that his granddaughter produced we hope to show. We'll have exhibits that relate to Walt's entire life and career but focusing, of course, on the Kansas City connections.

There is a very similar project under way in Marceline, and these two projects complement each other. Marceline is restoring the old Santa Fe train station there. The building has not been completely renovated yet but a portion of it is very nicely restored. And there is a wonderful museum that's now open in Marceline.

One of the reasons why that museum is very special is because they were the recipients of a gift from Walt's sister Ruth's children. Ruth was exactly two years younger than Walt, and she lived up until just a few years ago. When she died her own children didn't know that she had been accumulating and collecting every scrap of paper and an amazing number of artifacts that related to her entire family. From the days when they were in Marceline and Kansas City right up until the present time. The Marceline folks are now in the process of cataloging and preserving this amazing collection. It is a treasure trove of information and artifacts on Walt Disney's family. Things like his graduation certificate from Benton Elementary School in Kansas City. It was in a file at the Kansas City Library that was not related to Disney in any apparent way. But I was very lucky to be able to discover this piece of paper with the autographs of Walt Disney and his high school principal Mr. Cottingham and his favorite teacher in Benton School, Daisy Beck.

[Something else that came to light] were these very detailed drawings by Marvin Aubrey Davis of the plans for the St. Louis theme park. It would have been built immediately north of Busch Stadium.

CBM: So the Gateway Arch was under construction while this was being considered.

Viets: Exactly. When the plans were made for Busch stadium there was a two-block area set aside to be a shopping and entertainment district. Mayor Tucker of St. Louis and some of the other business leaders wanted Walt Disney to be a consultant. They went out to Burbank and, I

think, because they were from Missouri Walt agreed to meet with them. He was immediately intrigued with this idea, and came out to St. Louis not long after to look over the construction project. Both the arch and the stadium were going up at that point, and he also noted the fact that the brand new interstate highway system was going to have several major routes intersecting right in downtown St. Louis just as they do today. I think what really intrigued him about it is the fact that he saw a chance to be part of one of the largest urban renewal projects ever undertaken anywhere.

Walt was quietly moving into the area of city building at that point. Some of the most respected city planners in the country had described Disneyland as the most perfectly executed example of urban planning. From the beginning, Walt had described Disneyland as being a metropolis of the future—that was one of the phrases he used in the first episode of the Disneyland television program to describe what Disneyland was going to be. He wanted to be a city builder and so being part of the St. Louis urban renewal appealed to him.

CBM: Why did the St. Louis project never get carried through?

Viets: That's an interesting story too. The conventional wisdom among those people who were even aware that the project had been contemplated is that it fell through because Walt refused to serve liquor in the theme park. And there is, like many legends, some basis for that. The truth, based on our research, is that there was a press conference after one of Walt's trips to St. Louis, where he talked about his plans and he mentioned off-handedly that while there would be some fine restaurants in the project, there wouldn't be any alcohol served there. Later, at a private gathering of St. Louis business leaders, August Busch Jr. made the comment in a loud and rude manner and in Walt's presence that only a fool would go to an amusement park in St. Louis that did not serve beer. A lot of people thought that is what killed the project, but it turns out that Walt continued to work on the project for another year and half after that and he specifically came back to St. Louis a few months later and announced a compromise where alcohol would be served in the restaurants that were intended for adults. So it was clear he certainly personally had no opposition to drinking—he drank frequently himself—but he compromised on that point. That was not what killed the project. In fact it did not happen because of money.

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The two Walts.

When it came down to it, the St. Louis city leaders weren't willing to pass another bond issue or to raise the money to fund the project. Walt was putting all his money into swampland in central Florida. He had not announced the project yet and was not committed to Disney World when he started working on the St. Louis project, but he would have been perfectly willing to undertake both projects simultaneously. It didn't happen because he didn't have the money and St. Louis wouldn't put up the money.

CBM: It was interesting to me how many of the founding fathers of animation were present at these early Kansas City projects. And if you wouldn't mind commenting, tell us about his friend Walt Pfeiffer.

Viets: Sure. Pfeiffer was a good friend who lived just a few doors up the street when they were young boys. And while Walt's father was very austere and generally humorless, Pfeiffer's father was precisely the opposite. Pfeiffer's whole family liked to sing and dance and have a good time, so Walt Disney was very drawn to them. And Walt Pfeiffer was his age and the two of them began to do vaudeville presentations at amateur nights and theaters around Kansas City as the two Walts.

At one point they called themselves Ike and Mike. At another point they had a different name for their act. But Pfeiffer and he really had a great affinity for each other. And when the Laugh-o-Gram studio began in 1921, Pfeiffer—not immediately but shortly thereafter—came to work as part of the Laugh-o-Gram staff as well. Pfeiffer was credited at that time as scenario editor, whatever that means. But apparently he was a story man. Fifteen years later, when Walt was seriously thinking about making a feature length film and he had settled on Snow White, he was in Chicago where Pfeiffer had gone to work. Walt stops to see Pfeiffer and the two of them go visit the Field Museum—Pfeiffer talks about this in an interview. He says they were going through the museum and Walt was not watching the exhibits, but he was trying to sell Pfeiffer on the idea of coming back to work for him and being part of the Snow White project. Just as he had for his other artists, Walt was acting out the entire story of Snow White there in the Field Museum and raising the eyebrows of a lot of the guards according to Pfeiffer. At any rate Pfeiffer did agree to come back to work for his old friend, and stayed there until several years after Walt's death. He was one of the people from Kansas City that stuck with Walt, along with Ub Iwerks.

CBM: Hugh Harman, Rudolph Ising, Friz Freleng, these are men who made their reputation later in other studios.

Viets: Exactly right. When Walt got a foothold, he and Roy started making the *Alice* comedies in California. There were no others producing animation in Hollywood. So naturally Walt called on

his old friends from Kansas City who'd worked with him at Laugh-o-Gram, and some of the boys, like Friz Freleng, who had worked for the Kansas City Slide Company or later known as the Kansas City Film Ad Company. That's where Walt and Ub were both first exposed to the making of motion pictures. They had thought of themselves as still cartoonists and advertising artists until they went to work for the Kansas City Film Ad Company. At any rate, he called on his friends from Laugh-o-Gram and the Film Ad Company to join him out in California and this became the entire foundation of the early studio.

However, within a couple of years Walt had begun to make the *Oswald, the Lucky Rabbit* series. *Alice* had run her course, and Universal had entered into a contract with Walt's distributor to make this new series *Oswald, the Lucky Rabbit*. *Oswald* was doing really well, and Walt and his wife, Lilly, took that famous train trip east to renegotiate their contract.

It turned out that Charles Mintz, the man who had married his distributor, Margaret Winkler, had gone behind Walt's back and negotiated with all of his artists, except for Ub Iwerks, to come to work directly for Mr. Mintz. Mintz's idea was to cut Walt out. He figured he didn't need Walt, just his artists, and he could go on making these *Oswald Rabbit* cartoons without Walt Disney. He gave Walt the ultimatum that if Walt wanted to go on making cartoons he was going to have to come to work with him. We don't know the exact words, but Walt told him that he would not be coming to work for Mr. Mintz. But all of the other Kansas City boys except for Iwerks did defect at that point, including Harman and Ising, and Freleng actually left earlier. Freleng had an explosive temperament, and he and Disney just clashed personality wise. But, as you probably know, Harman and Ising in particular are pioneers. They became the very first animators to work at Warner Bros. and then MGM. Along the way they trained Hanna and Barbera. So between them the Kansas City crew pretty much founded the entire Hollywood animation industry.

CBM: Isn't it curious that these were all Missouri boys. Friz Freleng, Hugh Harman, Rudolph Ising, they were all high school buddies at Westport High School. I'm wondering what was special about that environment, or maybe what was special was Walt Disney.

Viets: I think it was the association with Disney. I don't think Harman, Ising, Freleng, or any of the others had set their minds on being animators but when they went to work ...well again the Film Ad Company is important.

The Film Ad Company is a critical part of the story. You know Disney and Iwerks had their own little agency for a couple of months and they worked for another outfit called Pesmen-Rubin for a couple of months. But they worked for A.V. Cauger Slide Co. for more than two years. It was while they worked there that they first thought about making moving pictures. Cauger loaned Walt a camera to take home to his Dad's garage. That's when Walt began his first independent experiments with animation. The Film Ad Company had a great influence on him.

But, yes, all of these artists and some of the story men—Clarence "Ducky" Nash also went to Northeast and came out of Kansas City….

CBM: So in many ways it was Cauger who is the spark that started it all.

Viets: It was in many ways. Cauger really deserves credit. His son is a good friend of mine now. Ted Cauger is in his 80s but a very active 80-year-old guy. A lot of the information on the illustrations in the photos that we have from the Film Ad Company came from Ted Cauger.

There is a photo of Walt and Ub working in the Film Ad building. Unfortunately, the building was destroyed a couple of years ago by the University of Missouri. Ted and I both lobbied to save this very important historical building. The University thought they needed a few more parking spaces and so they tore it down. But we did persuade them to save the original sign. No one knew it was still there until the demolition began. It is set in concrete in letters about a foot high and about 6 feet wide on three large slabs of concrete—Kansas City Slide Company. That will become an artifact in our Laugh-O-Gram Studio museum.

CBM: And the garage where he did his first animation, is that still standing?

Viets: It is indeed. As is his home. As I said, when they first moved to Kansas City they were on 31st Street. They got away from there after about a year and bought a house on Bellefontaine that still stands. It's on the National Register as is the garage. And they are both in great shape, very much as they were. You know Walt and his father, Elias, built that garage when they first moved to Kansas City. They added a bedroom and a bathroom on to the back of this house even though Walt said everything was up-to-date in Kansas City. In fact they didn't have a bathroom until they built one there. And they built this little garage even though Elias never owned a car. But Elias' idea apparently was to rent the garage out to people who did own cars in the neighborhood. He wound up renting it to Walt who used it for his first experiments in animation.

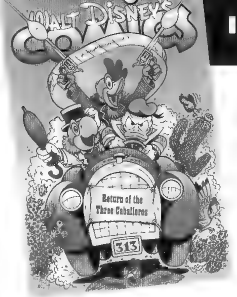
CBM: Is there anything else you'd like to add that I may not have touched on?

Viets: We haven't talked that much about Marceline, but maybe a little bit more about how Marceline influenced Disneyland might interest your readers.

CBM: Yeah, I've heard when I've taken trips to Disneyland that Main Street USA in Disneyland is more or less a replica of the Town Square at Marceline.

Viets: Yes, that's very true. It's not a brick-for-brick or building-for-building reproduction although there are some buildings that can be traced to specific buildings in Marceline. For instance, there's a post card of the Cater's Opera

[continued on page 77]



Nuggets from the Lost Gold Mine:
Don Rosa
on the Return of Disney Comics to the US Market

Interview by Bill Baker

Imagine that you're a comics artist, and that you're at the top of your game, producing perhaps the best work of your career. You're creating highly detailed and heavily researched tales that pay tribute to what's come before, yet are unmistakably yours, original and fresh. Now imagine that, when the comic you've been working on finally comes out, you can't read it.

If you can even find it, that is.

That's the sad and strange situation Don Rosa has found himself in for the past four plus years. Ever since Gladstone Comics closed their doors at the tail end of the '90s and Disney comics stopped appearing on the shelves of US comic stores, the only outlet for Rosa, and all the other folks who regularly contributed to the Disney line, has been the overseas market. An incredibly deep and rich market, true, but one that doesn't deliver product to America regularly—or in English. Which means that, yes, Rosa and the rest were still able to work on Uncle Walt's beloved characters and make a living doing it, but they were never able to go out and easily buy anything with their work in it.

But that's all about to change. As reported elsewhere in this issue, Gemstone Publishing will soon be issuing new (to the US) Disney comics. And Don Rosa, among many others, couldn't be happier.

With all this in mind, we decided to ask Rosa via e-mail how it felt to be doing work that wasn't being seen by family and friends, and how it feels to know that it's all about to change for the good. We also asked him about his favorite stories from this period, why he does so much "real world" research and how he uses it in his work. As you'll soon discover for yourself, his answers are just as interesting, informative and fun as those wonderful duck tales he makes.

CBM: It must have been incredibly frustrating to be producing work, yet never being able to read it. How does it feel, knowing that you'll soon be able to see those stories in print in America?

Don Rosa: You betch yer sweet life it's frustrating (but then there's little about this job that's not ultimately frustrating except the huge legions of European fans). And especially consider that I put many authentic details into my historical quests—partly because I enjoy the challenge and partly because it shows respect for the readers…but I never know if these carefully researched details are being preserved by the translators in the many different editions around the world. I know that often the translations are precise and careful, and other times they are done by people who wish to reduce stories to the level of their youngest or simplest-minded readers.

And even if I *could* read these dozens of languages, I couldn't keep track of it all. But when the stories were printed by Gladstone, and now that they'll be handled by those *same folks* now working for Gemstone, I always know the translations get first-class treatment.

CBM: Do you have any favorites among these "new to US" tales, and what about them makes them so special for you?

Rosa: There are reasons I like each story (and even more reasons I *dis*like each of my own stories)…but there are a few interesting ones in the offing. The

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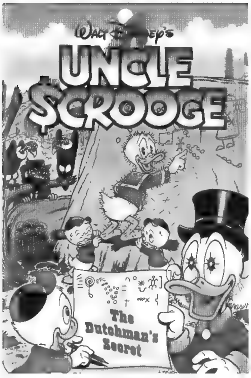


first one Gemstone will use is titled "The Dutchman's Secret" and involves Scrooge's search for the Lost Dutchman's Mine. As usual, I researched this one extensively, using historical facts and actual clues known only to the most devout Lost Dutchman Mine investigators—and, again as usual, I know most readers will assume I'm simply making all the facts up. But now that *this* story will be printed in America where people know something of this legendary treasure and actually still search for it, I'll be interested to somehow learn whether any treasure hunters actually see a possible new idea in how I deciphered the clues, and go take another weekend look for the Mine.

A story I also liked was one I'd planned for some time—a return of the Three Caballeros. This will be the first story I've done that's not based on Barks' version of Donald, but based on the film that I consider to be the only really *good* use the Disney corporation made of Donald Duck. I think 1945's "The Three Caballeros" is a classic, and I even found a way to insert a rendition of the great musical number performed in the film by Donald, Jose and Panchito even though it's a comic book! But after decades of Donald being exploited by Scrooge, insulted by Gladstone Gander and generally mistreated by the rest of the world, I wanted to try telling a tale where he is part of a trio of equals who actually accept him for who he is and even respect and admire him. It seemed to come off pretty well, and I hope to do another Three Caballeros story soon.

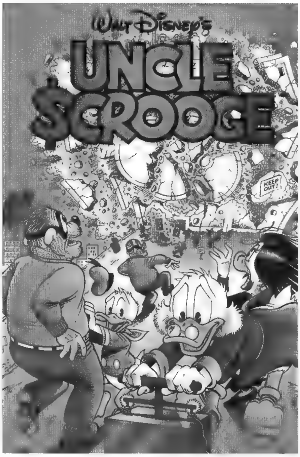
Meanwhile, I've done several "official 50th anniversary" stories for Europe, which will belatedly see print here. One was for Barks' Gyro Gearloose which was fun to do. But the other was a combo 50th birthday for Barks' Beagle Boys and the Money Bin in which I devote two pages to blueprint plans of the interior of the Bin. I created these authentic-looking and carefully detailed plans with a computer-architectural-designer pal and we had lots of fun on that project (but surely spent so much extra time on it that it blew the page-rate outta the water). But I think any readers as anal-retentive as I am will enjoy looking at them.

CBM: Faithful readers know that research, both historical and fictional, or into the Disney continuity, is very important to your work. This leads to the question of which comes first, the kernel of the story idea or the research?

Rosa: This would refer to the stories of the historical treasure hunt type, not the shorter "gag" stories. Those "gag" stories require no research, either for plot details or art details, and I can get them done *much* faster, page for page, than the overly complex treasure hunts that I do. Yet they are not as much of a challenge and I would get bored if all I did were the short "gag" stories—it was Barks' long adventures that I loved! And I thrive on complexity and detail. (But that's not to say that a good "gag" story is easy to do, it's just less complex and faster.)

Anyway, for a long adventure, I'll first have a legendary treasure in mind and history is filled with actual lost treasures and misplaced secrets. So, without any idea for a plot, I'll start researching in my own large reference library about the treasure, the time era, the locale, etc. I'll be slowly lead to certain interesting facts or areas which will compel me to go to the public libraries to glom extra reference or history books. Then I'll start filling a notebook with ideas and factoids—just writing down anything that catches my eye—knowing that I'll eventually only use perhaps 1% of the info I'm finding.

As I do the research, a plot will reveal itself. I know that I sound like your fourth grade teacher, but the facts of history are far more interesting than anything you could ever make up out of thin air. When I see all the intrigues and conspiracies and greed and heroism in the history I'm researching, I see obvious ways to string facts together to create a



really fun story. That's when the job gets exciting for me. I need to find ways to make *creating* the story rewarding in itself, since the pay when the job is done is not enough to warrant the extra effort.

CBM: What led to you using this approach, and what are some of the pros and cons of using this method?

Rosa: Perhaps the readers assume I'm making all these amazing facts up, so why should I bother to create 100% authentic storylines? Well, it seems like it's quite a challenge and quite an accomplishment to create a (hopefully) interesting and entertaining story using totally authentic history, and it's how I entertain myself. It's how I keep the job interesting. Barks used lots of authentic history in his stories, which is what inspired me, but he did not carry it to the extremes that I do. But I don't seek to imitate Barks—I use his work as my foundation because of how much I loved it when I was a kid and still do—but I can't tell Barks stories, I can only tell Rosa stories. I am a by-product of far more than just Carl Barks, so there are so many more influences in there.

There are certainly cons to this approach! As I said, it causes the work to take *much* longer than normal for the same per-page rate. So I'm slashing my income doing it this way. It also certainly limits the directions my story can go in if I don't allow myself to make up even a single fact to help myself along.

But the pros are that *I* think the resulting story is richer in texture and far more interesting to read (for some)—even if a reader doesn't know that all my facts are authentic, I think he can sense that there's a great deal below the surface, the same way we could sense that in Barks' stories. And it also gives me a boost in inspiration when even one reader somewhere in the world will realize that the tiniest background details are researched and authentic.

In one instance, I was at a book signing at a department store in Helsinki when a man passed me a note. I later read it—he was a Barks duck fan (like about 99.7% of the people in Finland) as well as a botanist. He was reading a story I'd done that was set in the mountains of Columbia ("The Last Lord of Eldorado"), and he noticed that a tiny flower in the corner of one panel was an orchid that grew *only* in that region of the world. He couldn't believe that I would go to such effort to make background details so accurate, but it's true. I always have books open that show me the flora and fauna of the area where a story is set—it's just another way to make the job fun. But it's especially nice when this effort is spotted by a reader. So, sitting in Louisville, drawing that panel, I'd placed that orchid in the corner *just* for that botanist in Helsinki to see, and that's good enough!

CBM: How do you know when enough research is enough, when you've gotten to that fine point where you've got all the material you need to make the story "real" for you and the reader?

Rosa: Unfortunately, I can't go on too long. All of this extra research is time I must "eat" ... I only get paid to create stories, not to create stories that are based on actual history or to show what orchid grows in Bogotá. It's not like I'm given a year or two of time and a cash-advance by a publisher to write a novel. I'm working on a flat-page-rate. So, after about two weeks of research and writing down factoids, I know that's all I can spare and I need to press on. That next book might have held the material that would have turned a decent story into a masterpiece, but I can't worry about it, gotta go with what I have.

But it's doing that research that is the most *fun* part of the job! That, and the appreciation of the millions of Duckfans in Europe is what makes it worthwhile!

Michigan State University LIBRARIES

Comic Art Collection

by Daniel R. Basso

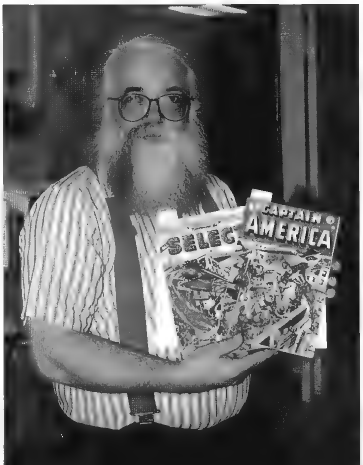
Tucked in an out-of-the-way corner in the Michigan State University library, behind a nondescript wooden door, sits one of the world's largest public collections of comic books and comic book art. The Michigan State comic collection, with more than 150,000 books either on hand or on microfilm, is rivaled for depth and breadth only by the Library of Congress. (Smaller collections also exist at Ohio State, Indiana University, Kent State, Northwestern, University of Chicago and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, among other locations.)

Randy Scott, the comic art bibliographer at Michigan State University's special collections library, says the institution is always looking for new material. "The special collection library has three main focuses—rare books, radicalism and popular culture (comic books, strips, etc.)," Scott says. "We collect everything. We cast our net pretty wide—anything that conceivably can be thought of as comic books."

"We have researchers who go to the Library of Congress and do all they can and then they come here to finish up," Scott noted.

Nebraska comics dealer Bob Beerbohm, who was at MSU researching a book while on his way from a show in Minneapolis to another in New York, called the collection one of the best. "This is one of the Meccas," Beerbohm said. "(Russel B.) Nye started this unbelievable collection. They've got a lot of stuff, but nobody's got it all."

The MSU collection focuses on American comics, but it has more than 20,000 foreign language books from France, Sweden, Japan, Mexico and other places.



MSU Comic Art Bibliographer Randall Scott shows off "Golden Age" copies of **All-Select Comics** and **Captain America**. The books are among more than 150,000 shelved or on microfilm at the MSU library.

And almost uniquely among collections—anyone interested in reading, say, an *Archie* No. 12 or Alex Schomburg-covered *Captain America* can do so at MSU. "You come down to the reading room and fill out a card requesting the issue you want," Scott explained. "If it's a child, they need to have a parent with them. If they're college-age, they pretty much can look at anything. If you're alive and you don't have jam on your hands you can use these comics."

The roots of the collection go back 30 years. Former Michigan State professor Russel B. Nye began organizing the collection's initial donations in 1970 while working on his book, *The Unembarrassed Muse*. Scott, who holds a master's degree in library service from Columbia University, did an undergraduate study with Nye, who retired in the mid-'80s and died in the early '90s, mapping out the future of the collection.

Scott's plan included placing the entire collection in the library's main catalog of materials—something that wasn't done with comic books at the time. "There were instructions in the Library of Congress catalog of books as late as the '70s saying the two or three things

that would not be cataloged were phone books and comic books—by policy," Scott noted. "They've changed quite a bit since then."

That the MSU library has a collection rivaling the Library of Congress (LOC) says as much about the lax state of security in previous decades at the LOC as it does about MSU's aggressiveness in acquiring books. The LOC receives two of every item published for copyright purposes. But, back when the books weren't cataloged, many of the more valuable editions walked out the door, were given away or disposed of.

MSU has come a long way as well under Scott's watchful eye. The majority of the library's comic works now are listed in the library's online catalog and the international OCLC network. In fact, you can check if the school has certain items over the Internet at www.lib.msu.edu/comics.

While materials are available at the collection's reading room, none leave the site. "We keep things on the shelves, so if someone drives from a long distance they know we have a good collection. Plus, a lot is inflammatory, desirable or fragile. But everything is available to everyone," Scott said. "Some things are a problem (due to age or condition) and we walk that line. We're not going to deny somebody who has a reason…we're not going to ask you if you are serious enough for this, but we're going to be able to tell if they can easily be switched to microfilm."

Of the books the MSU collection doesn't physically have, many were microfilmed in either color or black and white in the '70s or '80s. The library also allowed a commercial company to microfilm some books for resale in exchange for free films for the collection.

The collection area itself is shrouded mostly in darkness to preserve the fragile paper materials. The shelves move on tracks electrically, bunching together to conserve space. When a person wants to go down an aisle, they press a button to move the shelves and the fluorescent lights flicker on.

Prior to the addition of the automatic lights and shelving five years ago, the library stored its rare comics in white envelopes. Many of the books remain in envelopes as Mylar bags are only being phased in. Scott is still trying to track down a copy of *Dagwood Splits the Atom* that's hiding on the wrong shelf in a white envelope—a problem that doesn't occur with the clear Mylars.

The earliest issues on hand date to the late 1930s. Most of the issues from the earliest days of the medium are on microfilm, but there are hundreds of Golden Age books on the shelves. "I would never feel right paying collector's prices for a Golden Age comic," Scott said. "If I can get it some other way…"

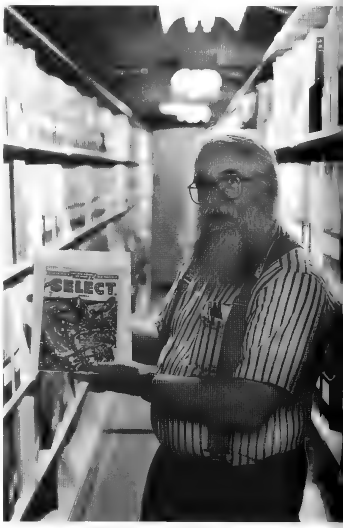
And Scott isn't shy about noting the "other way" means donations from generous collectors. One significant donation included more than 500 volumes of clipped comic strips from the *Sacramento Bee* from the 1920s to 1981. Collector Rodney Ford clipped a variety of strips and pasted them into books. He didn't miss a day between 1945 (following his release from the Army) to 1981.

The library even got a 1,000-book donation from Scott early on when he realized he didn't have the energy to build two collections. Also, for a time, the collection received regular donations of correspondence, pre-publication work and other items from the now-defunct Eclipse Comics. The library does have a small budget for acquisition, Scott noted. Many of the books purchased are compilations, reprints or foreign editions.

While the comics have an obvious attraction, many items—including mounds of papers donated by *Comic Buyers' Guide*—are awaiting researchers. "*CBG* sends us stuff every three months," Scott noted. "I don't know exactly what to do with it, but somebody will need them."

And thanks to MSU, those papers and vintage comics will be there when "somebody" arrives.

Dan Basso has been collecting comic books for 20 years. His favorites are the Legion of Super-Heroes *and premium of "giveaway" books. For his day job, he's the sports editor at a small Michigan newspaper.*



MSU Comic Art Bibliographer Randall Scott shows off a "Golden Age" copy of **All-Select Comics**. The "stacks" holding the comics at MSU move on tracks to conserve space and have automatic lights to reduce ultra-violet damage to the paper items.

by Mike Wilbur

Disney in 3-D

When talking high-end collectible character pieces, you'd be hard pressed to get any higher-ended than the bone china **Disney** figurines released by **Another Rainbow** in the early-to-mid-'90s. With original retail prices ranging between $5,000 and $7,500 and limited editions maxing at 100 pieces, they're tough to top for both price and scarcity.

One of the first things Another Rainbow founders Bruce Hamilton and Russ Cochran did upon landing the coveted Disney license in 1981 was to enlist the services of the legendary Duck Man, **Carl Barks**. Barks was commissioned to produce a series of Duck-themed oil paintings to be reproduced and marketed as limited edition lithographs.

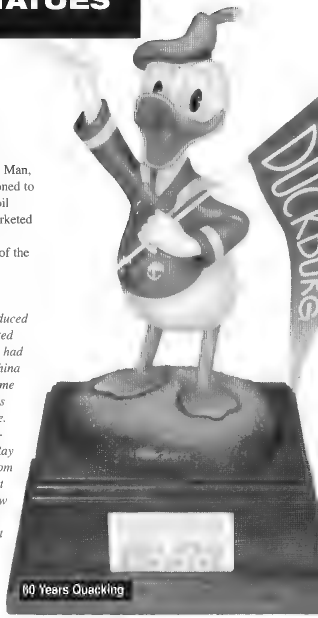
But lithographs were only part of the Barks picture at Another Rainbow. According to Hamilton:

Russ Cochran and I were introduced to Connoisseur of Malvern by [noted Barks collector] Kerby Confer. He had been a fan of their English bone china and he had the idea that maybe some Disney figures could be done. He also introduced us to Ray Blackman, from the Brielle art gallery in New Jersey. The four of us met in a hotel room after Kerby had taken the liberty of financing a prototype of Uncle Scrooge from the painting Always Another Rainbow.

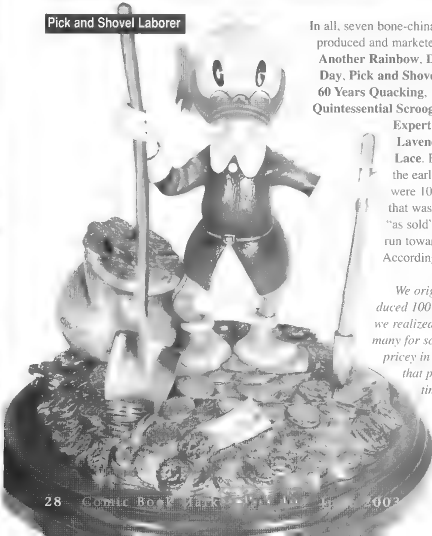
As a result of that one introduction, we then formed a very close alliance with Blackman and the owner of Brielle. Then we went over to England and worked with Connoisseur of Malvern. We sent a copy of the prototype to Carl, which he critiqued rather extensively. On the basis of what Carl showed us about how to correct that first piece, I also learned a lot of the physical structure of the duck that I had never known before.

After this first one, to avoid the same problem, Carl would provide us with several drawings of the duck or ducks as seen from the left, right, front and back, so the sculptors would see how it looked in ways you couldn't just perceive from looking at the original. It made all the difference in the world. The sculptors still made an error or two, but it got to the point at the end when I didn't even need to bother Carl because I had his drawings to go by and compare against the prototype. That's the reason the figures look so much like Carl's work; it was his vision.

Always Another Rainbow



60 Years Quacking



one exception in how we produced them was Lavender and Old Lace. *We produced them as they were sold. Even though we announced it as an edition of 25, I believe there were only 17 or 18 made. The numbers above that don't exist.*

A new wrinkle entered the scene in March of 2001. As a result of a buy-out deal with Disney, Hamilton's remaining unsold inventory of the bone china figurines was destroyed.

At an "event" witnessed by Hamilton, his family and Disney representatives, Hamilton's grandchildren did the "honors."

"There was a quarter million dollars worth of stuff smashed. The entire proceeding, from beginning to end, was videotaped. A figurine would be put into a box, one of the kids would work over the top of it so pieces of porcelain wouldn't go all over the place, and then they'd bring the hammer down," Hamilton recalled.

Total "death toll":

Dude for a Day: 26 out of 100

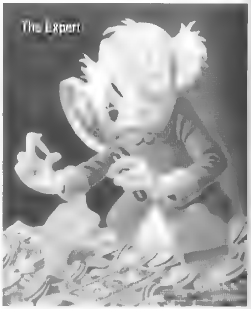
Pick and Shovel Laborer: 38 out of 100

60 Years Quacking: 56 out of 100

Quintessential Scrooge: 46 out of 100 (100 actually produced out of 500 planned)

In all, seven bone-china figures were produced and marketed, **Always Another Rainbow**, **Dude for a Day**, **Pick and Shovel Laborer**, **60 Years Quacking**, **Quintessential Scrooge**, **The Expert** and **Lavender and Old Lace**. Editions for the early releases were 100 units, but that was reduced to an "as sold" production run toward the end. According to Hamilton,

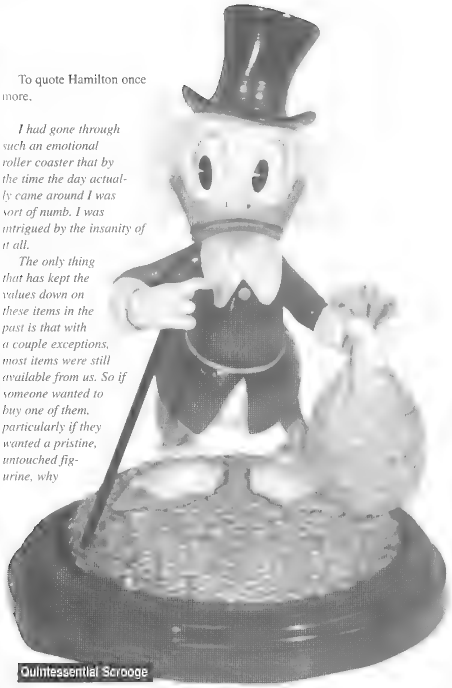
We originally produced 100 figurines, but we realized that was too many for something so pricey in our market at that particular time. We cut back to more expensive images, but in smaller editions. The

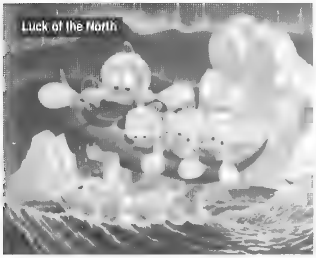


To quote Hamilton once more.

I had gone through such an emotional roller coaster that by the time the day actually came around I was sort of numb. I was intrigued by the insanity of it all.

The only thing that has kept the values down on these items in the past is that with a couple exceptions, most items were still available from us. So if someone wanted to buy one of them, particularly if they wanted a pristine, untouched figurine, why would they buy a "used" copy from someone else unless it was discounted?





However, now there are only a handful remaining in my own personal collection. When the market becomes fully aware that they can't just go out and get them, prices could increase drastically. It takes knowledge. People have to know about it for it to have an impact.

As well as the pieces

Comic Book

MARKETPLACE

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#52 Archie, All-Star, Schwartz Part III, Fox $8
#58 Lost in Space, Weisinger, Wolverton $10
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#72 Iron Man & Subby, Larry Lieber Part I $8
#73 Warren Horror, Lieber Part II $8
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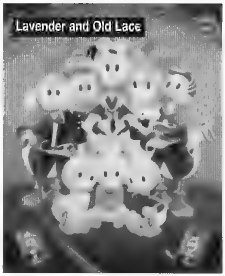
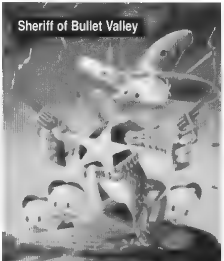




that were produced and marketed, many more prototype bone china pieces were created that never progressed to the actual production stage.

Several un-produced prototypes were on display at Barks' 95th birthday celebration and exhibition hosted by **Diamond International Galleries** in Timonium, MD in March of 1996.

In addition to the unprecedented display of nearly 100 original Barks paintings (a showing unmatched before or since), visitors were treated to samples of a once-in-a-lifetime look at what might-have-been.

Interspersed throughout the Gallery were the fully-painted prototypes to 3-dimensional re-creations of such Barks paintings as *Luck of the North*, *Far Out Safari*, *Sheriff of Bullet Valley* and *Flubbity Dubbity Duffer*. The ultimate fate of these one-off pieces is unknown, but they were truly awesome to behold. And with pre-production reserve prices ranging from $10,000 to $25,000, there would not likely be many around today, even if they *were* produced!

Do *YOU* Get It?

Virtually every aspect of existence involves two types of people—those who "get it" and those who don't. And the rift between the two is quite often unbreachable and irreconcilable.

This dichotomy especially applies when it comes to collecting, and the so-called "collector's mentality." How often have you thrown up your hands in frustration when trying to explain your collecting obsession to someone who doesn't "get it"? If that person doesn't have the **collector's mindset**, doesn't "get it," then no amount of explanation will make them "get it." You can spend hours walking them through it in minute detail, and

it still won't matter. Their brains just aren't wired that way. They'll continue to think of you as eccentric, or just a flat-out nut job, for wasting so much time and money and energy on such "pointless" pursuits.

The thing I find particularly inexplicable, however, is the close-mindedness of some collectors toward others. I may not collect stamps or coins, for example, but I certainly understand, respect and empathize with the focus and dedication involved in the pursuit. I don't collect antiques, but I grasp their historical and collectable significance.

Which brings us, circuitously, to the primary focus of this monthly column, character statues. This is the 17th column I've written for *CBM* on the subject, and I continue to be amazed and bewildered by the occasional reader who questions why *CBM* "wastes space" on "new stuff." No matter how many times I explain, in detail, the validity of devoting coverage to character statues, there are still some who persistently don't "get it."

In *CBM* #100, we printed a letter and picture submitted by a fan and collector who *did* make that synaptic connection, and his enjoyment of his collecting experience has been enhanced in the process.

I contacted the collector, **Tom Morehouse**, and took him up on his offer of pictures of his other displays. Some of those pictures accompany this column. There are some interesting conceptual groupings. Check them out.

And with that, I issue a challenge. Who else among you "gets it"? It's time to stand up and be counted. Lets see pictures of interesting or unique displays *you've* created to celebrate the many facets of comic and comic character collecting. How have these 3-dimensional works of comic art enhanced, enriched and enlivened *your* collecting experience?

Personally, several years ago, after decades of comic book collecting, I found myself at times just going through the motions, almost on autopilot. But, when I discovered and developed an interest in character statues, I found my **enthusiasm rekindled** and revitalized toward all things comic book.

And continued brisk sales activity on character statues indicates that I'm not alone in this renewed fervor. And it's *not* kids buying the stuff. The most commonly depicted characters aren't "theirs," and if they have that kind of disposable cash, they're spending it on the latest Playstation releases, not on statues.

So, how about **sharing** some of your displays with your fellow *CBM* readers? I'll devote a future column (or more, if response warrants) to your submissions. The gauntlet is down.

(tableaus clockwise from left) Fantastic Four vs Dr. Doom: All four Bowen full-size FF statues, plus Dr. Doom, backed with more Kirby original art and a piece of Kirby-illustrated Marvel stationary. **Avengers** #1: Bowen's Iron Man and Thor, and the evil Loki as produced by Diamond Select; Original Avengers Ant Man represented by a page of original art and the Hulk represented by a large pinback. Silver Age Early Avengers: Iron Man, Captain America, Giant-Man and the Wasp, along with a diecast Thor car and a page of Jack Kirby's original Avengers art New Gods: Kirby's Fourth World, represented by DC Direct's Darkseid statue, a page of original art, a promo poster, book and comic. Captain America: A multi-media cornucopia, with Bowen's resin Golden Age Cap, bronze Silver Age Cap, and Red Skull mini-bust; a convention booklet featuring Joe Simon's original Cap concept art, a '60s Cap paperback, a pinback, a Famous Covers action figure (in box), and a big Kirby Kollage. Hulk vs Thor: re-creating the famous battle from **Thor** #112, with Bowen's Hulk vs DST's Thor.

Mickey Mouse Weekly

Fun for the Whole Family

by Ray Chan

"Foreign" Disney comics are often coveted by Disney collectors, usually for their novelty value. By and large, these comics were merely reprints of US comic strips and publications, but usually translated into the native language of whichever country they appeared in. Some had panels chopped and stories re-edited, while others were packaged in different shapes, from tabloid size to digest form. But fans who investigate further will note that one non-US Disney publication sticks out among the dregs—the British publication called *Mickey Mouse Weekly*.

Mickey Mouse Weekly was first published in 1936 (with the premier issue cover dated February 8), and it is among the oldest of Disney foreign publications, along with the Italian *Topolino* (1932) and the French *Le Journal de Mickey* (1934). It was the British counterpart of *Mickey Mouse Magazine*, the US monthly launched about a year earlier.

While the *Magazine* was certainly a high-class production, the *Weekly* stood out for its incredibly eye-catching appearance—12 tabloid pages (with the page count increasing for special editions), four of them in shiny bright full-color photogravure.

The first issue featured a US daily strip, "Clarabelle's Courtship," on the back in glorious color, while the center pages featured the "Robber Kitten" serialization and a Floyd Gottfredson Mickey Mouse story. The Mickey Mouse strips would eventually be shifted to the last page, where they undoubtedly formed the highlight of this publication's run.

Most of the Mickey stories in the *Weekly* were drawn by Gottfredson and were printed in wonderful, gray-toned colors; remember, this was in the '30s, when this type of art form was still in its experimental stages.

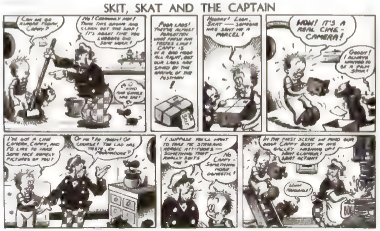
Stories included "The Terrible Bandit Wolf Barker," "The Great Ostrich Race," "The Phantom Blot," "Cave-Man Island" and "The Dude Ranch Bandit," a story later redrawn in 1959 by Paul Murry for *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* #229 to 233.

There were also full-color photogravure features of Disney strips such as *The Silly Symphonies*, *Snow White*, *The Ugly Duckling* and *Elmer the Elephant*, which frequently appeared in the center spread, but occasionally on the front page as well.

As a bonus, the *Weekly* featured many original stories and articles using Disney characters. Essentially "British" stories with British influences, they transplanted the Disney characters into typical British circumstances.

For example, Mickey and friends would be playing cricket, while Donald and his nephews would eat British foods (bangers and mash, pork pies, etc) bought with British currency.

All these stories were given a stamp of approval by US authority William Levy, who also placed on the *Weekly* the slogan "Fun For The Whole Family," borrowing it from *Mickey Mouse*



(above) The **Skit, Skat and the Captain** strip, later reproduced by Dell. (below) Who was that masked man? None other than the British adaptation of **The Lone Ranger**.

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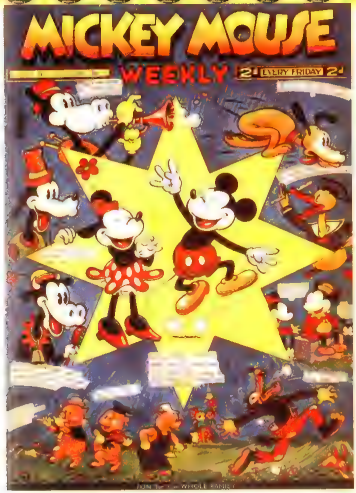
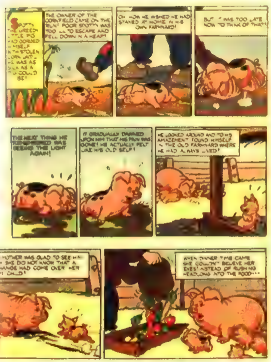


The first issue of **Mickey Mouse Weekly**, dated February 8, 1936.

A typical cover of **Mickey Mouse Weekly**, this one from the March 11, 1939 issue. Glorious colors, action-packed.

Magazine.

The *Weekly* also featured material that had no connection with Disney, and one particular strip—"Skit, Skat and the Captain"—was actually reprinted in Dell's *Popular Comics*. As well, there was a British adaptation of the Lone Ranger (debuting in 1939) along with other strips which, unfortunately, will be remembered more for their mediocre artwork than their capacity to entertain.



Another major hallmark of the *Weekly* was the beautiful covers drawn by Wilfred Haughton, the first man in England to draw Mickey Mouse under license for commercial purposes. Haughton was blessed with the knack of producing pictures which expressed overwhelmingly the magic of Disney, often making each title page a mini-comic of sorts, with various characters featured often participating in conversation involving simple or forced puns. Haughton was later forced to leave after refusing to alter his style of drawing in line with changes at the Disney studio. He was replaced by a number of successors.

In the post-war era, one of them, Basil Reynolds, created *Shuffled Symphonies*, a serial *[continued on page 77]*

(left) An internal strip, serializing **The Farmyard Symphony** (detail).
(right) A vertical half page cut-out feature from the "latest" Disney movie, **Ferdinand the Bull**.

Disney Comics:

© Disney Enterprises Inc.

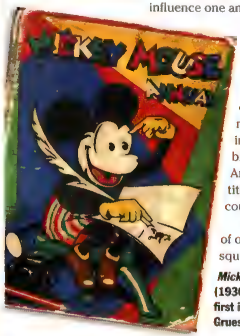
by David Gerstein

Walt Disney was fond of saying that his animation empire "all started with a Mouse." But what exactly did this mean? The Disney animation studio existed before Mickey. It can also be argued that without the coincidental novelty of sound, the renowned rodent would never have been an empire-starter.

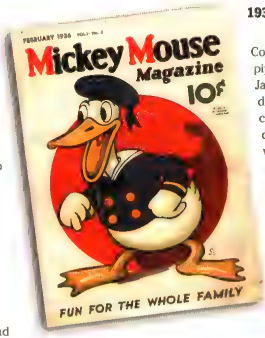
Now, to say that Disney's *comics* empire started with a Mouse? That's more like it. Beginning with Mickey and moving ahead—there were no Disney comics before the Mouse!—we can watch entire schools of creativity spring up on multiple continents, influence one another in fascinating ways, and play host to some of the comics medium's most creative innovators.

The story of Disney comics is also classic melodrama in action, including as it does the birth and death of more American comic book titles than many could count.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Let's begin at square one...



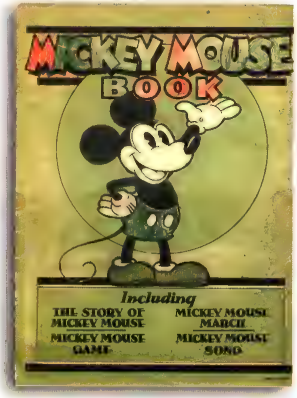
***Mickey Mouse Annual* #1 (1930) by Dean and Son was the first in a long British series. Gruesome, isn't he?**



1930s: All The World's A Barnyard

"Gee!!—but I'd like to fly, and be a great aviator like Col. Lindbergh!!" Big words from the mouth of a pipsqueak. But that's where Disney comics started January 13, 1930: with scrappy farmhand Mickey dreaming of an unlikely future as adventure hero and celebrity. And the dream, at first, seemed but a dream. Mickey's first funnies—daily strip pratfalls written by Walt Disney, pencilled by Ub Iwerks, and inked by Win Smith—were no big hit. But within the year, the starting strips' slapstick was supplanted by adventure serials and the original creative troika by Floyd Gottfredson, a master Mouse plotter with a unique take on Mickey's gang. The result was international success, the birth of a comic strip department within Disney (detailed in *CBM* #95), and a move to a new medium: Disney comic strips

Bibo and Lang's *Mickey Mouse Book* (1930) was the first American Disney publication.



back to long ago!

Guess Who?
"I HAVE to wear this—my OTHER suit's at the tailor's!"
Dear Readers:
There's a lot of talk going around that I'm a trouble-maker and a fightstarter. What a laugh! Anybody who knows Donald Duck, knows that I am as nice a chap as a person would want to meet, but for some reason no persons want to meet me! I guess it's because you're all afraid, eh? Well, we won't discuss how swell I am—because that's unan-unamin—sorry, I can't say "unanimous." I s'pose you're wondering why I'm on the cover of this issue. Well—I didn't really want to be on the cover, but thousands and thousands of fan letters came to the editor *begging* him to use *my* picture on the cover. That's why I finally consented to pose! (My arm is still tired from writing all those fan letters!)
Your pal,
"DONALD (FRONT-COVER) DUCK"
Editor's Note: *Now that Donald has stepped out of the room, we want to explain about using his picture on the cover this month. We had to! We planned to use Mickey again, but when Donald found out, he got furious. The next thing we knew he had his boxing gloves on—and—well—who can refuse Donald Duck anything when he has his boxing gloves on? That's why the pest is on the cover. Forgive us, won't you?*

Many of us recognize Donald's cover turn on Hal Horne's *Mickey Mouse Magazine* #5 (1936, opposite). But few of us know the story behind it—as revealed on the inside pages!

led to Disney comics publications.

The domestic paperback *Mickey Mouse Book* and Britain's hardback *Mickey Mouse Annual* #1 both hit the stands in late 1930. The creative talent made no secret of where their influences lay. In Bibo and Lang's *Book*, the "Story of Mickey Mouse" by Bobette Bibo was a fantasy-based text fable, but

Is that black-haired bird who Wilfred Haughton says he is? Prenatal Donald from *Mickey Mouse Annual* #3 (1932) was revived as "Dennis the Duck" for the 2001 Disney TV series, House of Mouse.

MORE 'HOOZOO'
Tom and Dick and Harry Bum laugh at Mickey with a gun. Knowing they are safe and sound, Mickey couldn't hit the ground.
Donald Duck and Clara Hen, Robert Rooster, Jenny Wren, Mickey's many farmyard friends.
They'll not catch him when he bends.
Olga Owl if she'd a chance would lead our friend a pretty dance

artist Albert Barbelle borrowed Mickey models from some newspaper dailies. In Dean and Son's *Annual*, the strip's influence was far greater: comics were the main theme of this book. Famed English cartoonist Wilfred Haughton drew more than a hundred pages of original Mickey strips, using gags in part borrowed from the Iwerks/Smith series.

The next few years brought additional milestones. In 1931,

Floyd Gottfredson

Mouse Man Floyd Gottfredson began work for Disney as an animation assistant. One day in 1930, the job was interrupted by a special duty: Walt needed a fill-in artist for the *Mickey* newspaper strip. Floyd took the 'temporary' post; but soon, it had become a permanent job both drawing and plotting Mickey's adventure continuity.

Gottfredson created classic co-stars for Mickey's world: ex-con Butch, Captain Churchmouse, Eli Squinch, Dr. Einmug, and the fiendish foe of "Mickey Mouse Outwits the Phantom Blot" (*Four Color* #16). The new recruits were abetted by Gottfredson's brilliant characterizations of Minnie, Horace, Clarabelle, Pete, and especially Goofy.

Floyd's greatest achievement arguably had less to do with Mickey's supporting cast, though, than with Mickey himself. Instead of seeing his hero as an adult, role-model rodent, Floyd portrayed "a mouse against the world"; a stubbornly optimistic, imperfect but determined youth trying to prove himself in competitive and scary surroundings.

Gottfredson himself survived the scares, working with Mickey adventure continuities until 1955 and Mickey gag-a-day strips until 1975.

Italy's *Nel Regno Topolino* #40 collected Federico Pedrocchi's "Donald Duck and the Secret of Mars" (published here in *Donald Duck* #286, 1994). The historic serial thus became the first all-in-one duck adventure comic.

with *Mickey Mouse Series* #1, Philadelphia publisher David McKay began a line of black-and-white Gottfredson reprint albums; overseas, with *Les Aventures de Mickey*, French publisher Hachette did the same. The first real Disney magazine arrived in 1932: Italy's *Topolino* weekly tabloid featured Gottfredson hand-me-downs, locally produced comics and non-Disney American newspaper strips. In the summer of 1934, France followed suit with a similar tabloid, *Le Journal de Mickey*.

In the mid-1930s, what one might call the "powerhouse" Disney magazines emerged. The American *Mickey Mouse Magazine* dated back to January 1933, when Disney marketers Kay Kamen and Hal Horne introduced it as a theatre and dairy tie-in. But it was in 1935 that it became a full-fledged newsstand series with a large amount of original material. In the UK one year later, Odhams Press followed suit with a Wilfred Haughton-driven tabloid equivalent, *Mickey Mouse Weekly*. Aside from sharing content back and forth—beginning the Disney tradition of international partnership—Horne's and Odhams' large, attractive magazines inspired a rush of worldwide spin-offs. Sweden's *Musse Pigg Tidningen* and Switzerland's *Micky Maus Zeitung* are only two of the better known.

What was in a typical early Mickey periodical? Along with short, original comic strips, *Mickey Mouse Magazine* #5 features an editorial supposedly by Mickey ("Just Between Us"), then half- and full-page gag cartoons with Disney characters. There's a stage play for readers to put on ("Uncle Dumb's Cabin") and a couple of stories in prose—one Disney-specific, the other not. The material in the *Magazine*'s overseas cousins was of the same basic type.

All of these publications reflected the expanding Disneydom of both Gottfredson and the film cartoons. Enthusiastic Mickey sought adventure; sensible Minnie tried to keep him down to earth; Pluto the bloodhound sniffed out trouble; windy Horace Horsecollar bragged; gossipy Clarabelle Cow waxed romantic; and gangster Pete and lawyer Sylvester Shyster brewed criminal intrigues.

Supporting characters came from Disney's *Silly Symphony* cartoons and Sunday strip. Some—like Cock Robin and Dirty Bill—didn't last, but sticking around would be insect wanderers Bucky Bug and Bo, Zeke the frustrated Big Bad Wolf, and three Oscar-winning little pigs named Fiddler, Fifer, and Practical.

Some new creations were even more successful, rising to join Mickey as studio stars. The lovable hayseed named first Dippy Dog, then Dippy Dawg, debuted on-screen in 1932 and in the Sunday comics January 8, 1933. Known inside Disney by another name—"the Goof"—Dippy found his public moniker morphing to fit. He became "Goofie" in Horne's February 1935 *Mickey Mouse Magazine* and Goofy not long after, though the name Dippy would remain in occasional use as late as 1941.

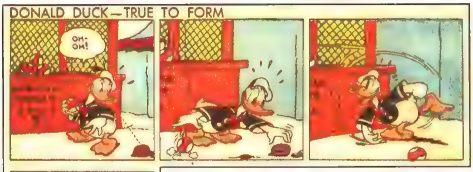
Mickey interrogates long-lost Disney bit player Gideon Goat in "Country Life" (Mickey Mouse Annual #3, 1932).

Wilfred Haughton

When British publisher Dean and Son published *Mickey Mouse Annual* #1 in fall 1930, there had never been a Walt Disney comics periodical before, nor a regular artist to draw it. Taking the position and sticking with it for a decade, Wilfred Haughton produced the first-ever Disney stories designed in comic book format.

Haughton was heavily influenced by traditional English music hall humor. Indeed, his pre-Disney, self-created characters "Ebb and Flo" were black minstrels with blatant vaudeville roots. Haughton's Mickey and Minnie had vaudeville roots, too, mixing Gottfredson mannerisms with veddy British puns and proto-Pythonesque sadism. In "Mickey Comes Out" (*MMA* #3), the Mouse is smacked with a dog's decapitated head.

From 1936, Haughton also drew the glorious, photogravure color covers of Odhams Press' *Mickey Mouse Weekly*. Shedding his early anarchy for the job, Haughton now came closer to the authoritative versions of Mickey, Minnie, and particularly Goofy ("the loon," as Haughton called him). The *Weekly* covers were such a success that publishers adopted them across Europe, turning Haughton into a trend-setting artist.



Early *WDC&S* included more Donald Sunday strips than dailies, but the latter did appear too. Here from *WDC&S* #1 is the strip for March 3, 1938, written by Homer Brightman and drawn by Al Taliaferro

Disney's most important 1930s creation, however, was indisputably Donald Duck. The eternal underduck's debut was arguably earlier than is often pegged: his name is given to a generic quacker in a 1931 Mickey storybook, and Wilfred Haughton draws him as a blackfaced fowl in 1932's *Mickey Mouse Annual* #3. In any event, 1934 saw the now-familiar white, temperamental Don starring in both cartoon and comic strip versions of the Silly Symphony *Wise Little Hen*.

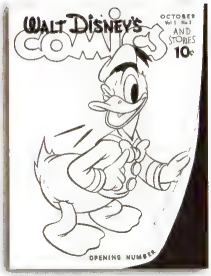
With his major dose of attitude—"Wanna fight?"—Donald was a force to be reckoned with, and Disney publications reflected his sensational rise. The 1936 *Mickey Mouse Magazine* text features slowly transform the Duck from Mickey's rival into a friendly, albeit glory-hogging pal. *MMM* also reprinted Don's first solo newspaper strips, Sunday gags by writer Ted Osborne and classic Duck artist Al Taliaferro. In Britain, 1937 *Mickey Mouse Weekly* offered William Ward's "Donald and Donna," an original series featuring the first Duck girlfriend, Donna Duck, and the first Duck adventure continuity. Italy took the next unprecedented step, reissuing their own 1937 Donald serial—Federico Pedrocchi's "The Secret of Mars" (*Paperino* #1-18/*Donald Duck* #286)—as the first-ever all-in-one, all-Donald adventure comic the following spring.

The rise of the Duck matched the rise of comics as Disney's magazine storytelling medium of choice. In 1937 Western Publishing, previously only a book licensee, took over Horne's *Mickey Mouse Magazine* operation. Along with a shift to newsprint pages and full color interiors, Western implemented an increase in the number of newspaper strip reprints per issue. The trend, likely an effort to compete with newsstand comic books like *Famous Funnies*, was a sign of things to come.

After sending Mickey off on a solitary desert mission, legion commander Pete is ordered to recover him or face a court-martial. This sequence from "Mickey Mouse in the Secret Service" (*WDC&S* #9, 1941) ranks among Gottfredson's greatest triumphs.

1940s: Duck! It's Disney

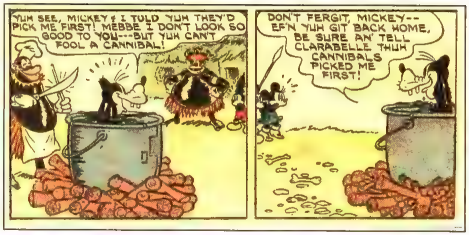
One might say the spirit of the 1940s was born in 1939. That's when Western Publishing launched Dell's *Four Color* series, one-shot comics containing a wide variety of newspaper strip material. Early the next year the first all-Disney number came out—#4, featuring Donald Duck—and its big-league success was the straw that broke the mouse's back. *Mickey Mouse Magazine* was already gaining comics pages rapidly; why not speed its transformation into a full-fledged funnybook? Western editor Eleanor Packer saw her chance and took it. Dumping many of *MMM*'s surviving editorial pages and adopting a new masthead title, Packer brought out the first modern Disney comic in October 1940. *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* had arrived.



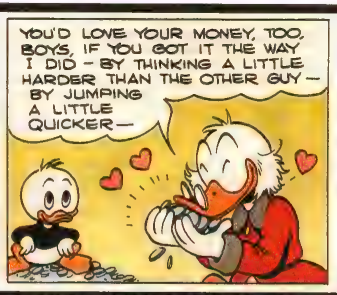
The cover of *WDC&S* #1 (1940) is often seen in reinked form, for example on *WDC&S* #600. But no imitation quite matches the original, which appears here in black and white line art for what we believe to be the first time.

Never had there been Disney magazines with so many comics pages. There was now room for any

HOW DO YUH FEEL, NOW AIN'T GONNA DO ANY DIRTY WORK AROUND HERE, EITHER!
GIMME ANOTHER DRINK! I NEED HELP TO GET OVER THE SHOCK OF SEEING YOU HERE!
THERE! NOW I'LL GIT 'EM BACK AN CLIMB ON BEHIND YUH!
THAT'S A GOOD IDEA!
BUT I'VE GOT A BETTER ONE. YOU GO IN MY PLACE AND WHEN HE WALKS OUT HERE—
SEE HOW YOU LIKE IT WHEN YOU'RE WORKIN BACKWARDS!


YUH SEE, MICKEY, I TULD YUH THEY'D PICK ME FIRST! MEBBE I DON'T LOOK SO GOOD TO YOU---BUT YUH CAN'T FOOL A CANNIBAL!
DON'T FERGIT, MICKEY--- EF'N YUH GIT BACK HOME, BE SURE AN' TELL CLARABELLE THUH CANNIBALS PICKED ME FIRST!

Gottfredson's "In Search of Jungle Treasure" (*WDC&S* #4, 1941) brilliantly sums up Goofy's character. He's no fool; he thinks longer and harder than most about being cooked by cannibals. Then he just sort of puts the wrong spin on it.


YOU'D LOVE YOUR MONEY, TOO, BOYS, IF YOU GOT IT THE WAY I DID - BY THINKING A LITTLE HARDER THAN THE OTHER GUY - BY JUMPING A LITTLE QUICKER -

The inimitable Scrooge in "Only a Poor Old Man" (Uncle Scrooge *Four Color* #386, 1952).

Carl Barks

Born in 1901 in Merrill, Oregon, Carl Barks was an errand boy, farmer, lumberjack, and railroad repairman before becoming a cartoonist. In November 1935 he applied to work at the Disney Studio, joining the Donald Duck cartoon story crew shortly after. There he helped to turn the Duck from a bully into a likeable braggart with dreams of glory.

Moonlighting with his colleagues in 1941, Carl dabbled in comic books, helping to write Western Publishing's "Pluto Saves the Ship" (*Large Feature Comics* #7), then joining Jack Hannah to draw "Donald Duck Finds Pirate Gold" (*Four Color* #9). Leaving Disney in 1942, Barks began a twenty-plus-year career both writing and drawing Duck comics for Western. In so doing, Barks developed a more nuanced Donald—and a richer world for the famous fowl—than had ever existed before.

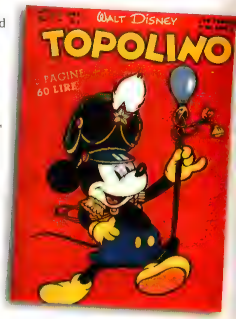
Carl Barks' self-created Duckburg cast of Uncle Scrooge, Gladstone Gander, Gyro Gearloose, Magica De Spell and others is arguably the greatest contribution ever made to Disney comics by a single person. In many countries of the world, Carl's deeply human ducks have also become a contribution to folklore.

newspaper strip adventure continuity, no matter the length, and some greats were hustled onstage. "Island in the Sky," Floyd Gottfredson's 1936 masterpiece (*WDC&S* #1-2), mixes Mickey with atomic scientist Dr. Einmug, while "His Royal Highness" (*WDC&S* #6-9) shows the mouse as substitute prince in palace scandal and revolution. Floyd did well with Goofy, too: "In Search of Jungle Treasure" (*WDC&S* #4-5), the Goof considers it a great honor to be cooked first by the cannibals.

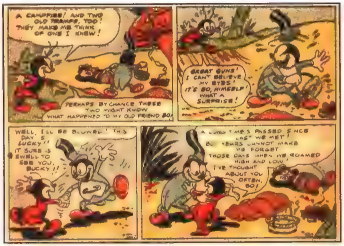
These Gottfredson classics were backed by equally classic shorter continuities and gags. Early Duck Sunday strips by Osborne and Taliaferro continue to appear in the first few *WDC&S*; in them, we see Donald's transformation from childish prankster to beleaguered uncle of the famous Huey, Dewey and Louie. The Silly Symphony Sunday strip's Three Pigs tales (*WDC&S* #5, 10, 16) show another transformation: pigs and wolf who'd been simplistic on-screen grow into multidimensional sharp thinkers.

Eleanor Packer was a sharp thinker, too. By 1942, she saw that a good thing—the supply of Disney stories she had for her comics—was beginning to come to an end. With both *Four Color* and *WDC&S* reprinting them, the supply was running low; and with World War II at its worst, most European production had temporarily disbanded. If Western wanted more comics and stories, they would have to produce them themselves.

"The Flying Gauchito," a story in *WDC&S* #24 probably pencilled by Walt Kelly, was the first Western-produced piece to



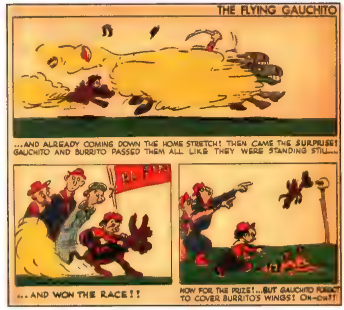
Italian Topolino digest #1 (1949). Haven't we seen this image before? Bandleader Mouse's previous gig was on the back cover of Western's *WDC&S* #9 (1941).


A CAMPFIRE! AND TWO OLD TRAMPS, TOO! THEY MAKE ME THINK OF ONE I KNEW!
PERHAPS BY CHANCE THESE TWO MIGHT KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO MY OLD FRIEND BO!
GREAT GUNS! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S BO! HELP! WHAT A SURPRISE!
WELL, I'LL BE BUSHED! THIS CAN'T BE LUCKY!! IT SURE IS TROUBLE TO SEE YOU, BUCKY!!
A LONG TIME PASSED. FACE TO FACE WE MET! BO BARS COULD MAKE US FORGET THOSE DAYS WHEN WE ROAMED THE COUNTRY SIDE AND LOVED THE OPEN SKY!
AND YOU, BUCKY, OLD BOY!

First encountering Old Man Bo in 1932 newspaper strips, Bucky Bug renews the friendship in this story by Carl Buettner (*WDC&S* #56, 1945).

appear in that series. But the opening salvos of Western's Disney production came a little earlier, and for one-shots: "The Reluctant Dragon" and "Dumbo" (*Four Color* #13 and #17), "Pluto Saves the Ship" (*Large Feature Comics* #7), and *FC* #9, "Donald Duck Finds Pirate Gold." The last two stories marked the debut of now-famous 'Duck Man' Carl Barks.

Carl Barks was not the first man to create Donald Duck adventure stories. But he was almost certainly the first to have unconditional respect for his readers and his art form. In stories like "Ghost of the Grotto" (*FC* #159), "Sheriff of Bullet Valley" (*FC* #199), and the famous square egg quest "Lost in the Andes" (*FC* #223), Donald's family grew from cartoonish quacks into multifaceted, self-aware figures. And on the Ducks'


THE FLYING GAUCHITO
...AND ALREADY COMING DOWN THE HOME STRETCH! THEN CAME THE SURPRISE! GAUCHITO AND BURRITO PASSED THEM ALL LIKE THEY WERE STANDING STILL!
...AND WON THE RACE!!
NOW FOR THE PRIZE!...BUT GAUCHITO FORGOT TO COVER BURRITO'S WINGS! OH-OH!!

"The Flying Gauchito" (*WDC&S* #24, 1942) was the first original story produced for *WDC&S*. The blur of action and adult characters' stares suggest the pencil work of Walt Kelly.

Zeke Wolf makes a promise under duress. From "Zeke Midas Wolf" (*WDC&S* #106, 1949).

Gil Turner

Gil Turner cut his teeth as a Schlesinger and MGM animator in the 1930s and 1940s, surely not guessing he'd make his mark with Disney characters. He did so from 1947 to 1957, though, when—starting with *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* #85—Western Publishing assigned him to write and draw Li'l Bad Wolf stories.

The basic Wolf concept was very simple. Pig-friendly Li'l Wolf is an unnaturally good wolf; his father, Zeke the Big Bad Wolf, wants him to be bad. Turner's gift lay in instilling this basic contretemps with surprisingly real emotion. Under Turner, Zeke turned from simple grump into misunderstood crusader for nature's way. His Big Bad "wolfishness" became a life philosophy with provisions for sloth, littering, ignorance and disobedience—all of which were encouraged, of course.

"If I hadn't started fibbin' in the cradle, I'd have been a failure!" insists Big Bad in one story, never considering how sorry he'll be should Li'l Wolf really start to lie. Suggesting that we try to understand human commitment and dedication even when it is misguided, Gil Turner taught his readers a simple truth.

wings, Western flew to regular production of stories with other Disney stars. By the end of World War II, Western's own stories filled half of *WDC&S*. By 1947 Mickey, Donald and others had regularly scheduled slots within *Four Color*, which became the characters' own individually-numbered titles a few years later.

It was also in 1947 that Carl Barks helmed a great achievement. Scrooge McDuck was not the first lasting character to be created for a Disney comic book, but he was surely the most important. His creation, for all that, was fairly prosaic: "I just needed a rich uncle for the [Christmas] story I was going to do," Barks recounted. "I thought of this situation of Donald...getting involved with a bear up in the mountains. Somebody had to own this cabin he was going to..."[1] Scrooge—named with a one-off Yuletide adventure in mind—didn't come across as star material in "Christmas on Bear

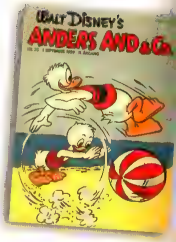
"AN' SINCE BREER FOX WEIGH MORE THAN BREER RABBIT...
HAUL IN DE MAN-O' DEM, FITZY-POTSY FISHALOO FISHES YO YOU KIN, BRER FITZ.
DEN JUST STRETCH OUT IN DAT NICE, COOL PLACE DOWN DESE!
AY PRAYERS IS ANSWERED!

Brer Rabbit, Brer Bear, and Brer Fox are up to tricks in an early work from Paul Murry (*WDC&S* #77, 1947).

Mountain" (*Four Color* #178); but his money, spite and determination kept him in Barks' mind. As he reappeared over the years following, the "squillionaire" Duck enriched more than Duck stories: his success showed that Disney comics characters could match their screen relatives in popularity.

It must have been an emboldening realization for Western staffers, who by the end of the '40s were well into a golden age. Li'l Bad Wolf, Big Bad's goody-goody son, had been created by editor Chase Craig and artist Carl Buettner in 1945, meeting his definitive writer/artist in Gil Turner from 1947. Turner, Vivie Risto, Buettner and others drew new adventures of Bucky Bug, male ladybug hero of Junkville town, while Paul Murry offered up smart Brer Rabbit in memorable swampland sagas. *Pogo*'s Walt Kelly, drawing early *WDC&S* gags during World War II, told of crafty Gremlin Gus and his saboteur Widget pals. Young warrior Little Hiawatha went hunting in stories by Roger Armstrong. And aside from Scrooge, Carl Barks offered other Duck supporting characters—annoyingly lucky Gladstone Gander and feuding Neighbor Jones, the latter of whom appeared in other creators' work before decade's end.

More Disney magazines were being published by decade's end, too. There was a giant *Christmas Parade* extra, *March of Comics* and Cheerios cereal giveaways, and *Four Color* issues for even minor Disney characters. The sheer volume of material attracted reviving overseas publishers. When Scandinavia's Gutenberghus Publishing Service put out its first Disney comic books in Norway (*Donald Duck & Co* , 1948), Sweden (*Kalle Anka & Co*, 1948), and Denmark (*Anders And & Co.*, 1949), new Western stories filled them almost full. The same went for Italy, where *Topolino* was rebirthed as a digest. When a new Italian-produced story did appear—"Mickey's Inferno" (*Topolino* #7-12), a classic Dante satire by Guido Martina and Angelo Bioletto—it reflected Western's production in its use of characters like Li'l Bad Wolf and Brer Rabbit. Poughkeepsie's editors were, for the time being, kings of the Disney press.



1950s: Of Mouse and Men

The 1950s were a Mickey Mouse decade in several senses. To begin with, the few years preceding had been a lean time for Disney films. Lacking the budgets that enabled pre-war artistic experimentation, Walt's crew had been

OH, MEL! OH, MY! AND I USED TO THINK I WAS RICH!
SOLID RUBY ARROW-HEADS!
AND LOOK AT THIS! A BIG, FAT COW CARVED FROM A SOLID EMERALD!
THAT BOYS COULD EASILY BE THE MOST VALUABLE SINGLE OBJECT IN THE WHOLE WORLD!
DON'T TOUCH IT!
THERE'S A PUSH ROD HOOK-UP BACK HERE!... IT'S SOME SORT OF BOOBY TRAP!
SURE ENOUGH! IF THAT IDOL IS MOVED, IT TOPPLES THE ROCK!...
AND THE ROCK WILL KNOCK OUT THAT PILLAR...
WHICH WILL COLLAPSE THAT CLIFF! AND AFTER THAT— WELL, IT'S A DEVICE TO CAVE IN THE ENTIRE CANYON AND BURY THE SEVEN CITIES!
THEY SURE SHOULD HAVE HUNG A "DO NOT DISTURB" SIGN ON THAT OLD IDOL!

Wanderers of wonderlands: suspense and imagination highlight Barks' early Scrooge adventures. From "The Seven Cities of Cibola" (Uncle Scrooge #7, 1954).

RUIZ DRAWS HIS GUN, BUT SUDDENLY...
ZORRO PULLS RUIZ OFF HIS FEET...
CRACK
HELP...I...I'LL FALL OVER THE EDGE!
DO NOT LEAVE THIS WORLD JUST YET, SENOR...THERE ARE QUESTIONS I WANT YOU TO ANSWER!
G-GRACIAS, SENOR ZORRO! GRACIAS! I WILL---
CRAAACK
DO YOU WISH TO FOLLOW YOUR PISTOL, SENOR? IT IS A LONG WAY DOWN!

In a change from the more usual Alex Toth, adventure artist Warren Tufts brings Zorro to life in "The Spaniard's Secret" (*FC* #1037, 1959).

Paul Murry

Born in 1911, Missouri farmer Paul Murry got bored of the sod, teaching himself to be an advertising artist in 1937 and a Disney cartoonist the next year. After assisting pivotal Mickey Mouse animator Freddy Moore, Murry moved on to create publicity art and draw Disney newspaper strips, including *José Carioca*, *Panchito* and *Uncle Remus*. Departing the Studio in 1946, Murry switched from comic strips to comic books. Beginning with *Four Color* #129—an Uncle Remus title—Murry began a thirty-eight-year Disney freelance career with Western Publishing.

Fallberg and Murry regularly set Mickey adventures on Mr. Clinker's train line. This example is from "The Vanishing Railroad" (*WDC&S* #185, 1956).

Murry drew almost every Disney character of the time, from Snow White to Humphrey Bear. But due, Murry said later, to his training with Moore, he gravitated especially to Mickey Mouse. Paul's first Mickey story, "The Monster Whale" (*Vacation Parade* #1), made few waves in 1950. But Murry was made in Mousedom three years later, launching a twenty-year run of *WDC&S* Mickey mystery serials. Together with the serials' usual writer, Carl Fallberg, Murry took Mickey and Goofy around the world in search of crooks and capers.

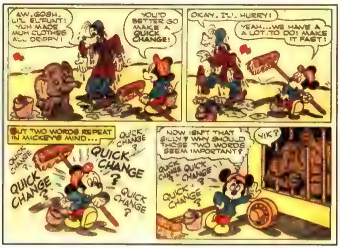
cooking up simpler fare. And while no one would call *Alice in Wonderland* (1951), for instance, an example of poor draftsmanship, Disney movies nevertheless began to lose the cachet of high culture that they'd once entertained. As went the studio, so went its mascot. The term "mickey mouse" began to represent—for the public—all things short and kiddified.

It was mickey mouse comics, then, that our comics industry was increasingly expected to produce in the 1950s. The Comics Code movement then gathering steam was not merely about stereotyping comic books as a violent medium; it was about stereotyping comic books as a *children's* medium, as non-fans typically felt them to be. That many comic books weren't meant for kids was unimportant. Squeaky-clean, simple—mickey mouse—comics were what powerful pundits demanded, and the atmosphere meant trouble for creativity.

Unless, of course, your mickey mouse comics starred *the* Mickey Mouse.

It was true: the Red Scare '50s were a high point for Disney comics. So the form was stereotyped as kids' stuff; so prevailing tastes were conservative? So Disney comics had played along with the stereotype for years—while never *just* for kids, they were always kid-*friendly*. And Disney comics could be conservative and progressive at once—by stocking a deceptively simple, traditionalist world with surprisingly three-dimensional, desire-driven characters. These characters had the power to attract all ages to young people's stories. Or as Carl Barks said on numerous occasions, "I always tried to write a story that I wouldn't mind buying myself."

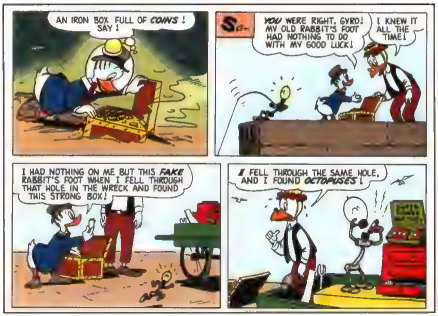
The 1950s found buyable Barks in numerous spots.


AW...GOSH...LIL BUTRUP? YUH MADE MUH CLOTHES ALL DROOPY!
YOU'D BETTER GO MAKE A QUICK CHANGE!
OKAY...I'LL HURRY!
YEAH...WE HAVE A LOT TO DO! MAKE IT FAST!
BUT TWO WORDS REPEAT IN MICKEY'S MIND...
QUICK CHANGE
NOW ISN'T THAT SILLY? WHY SHOULD TWO WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?
NIX?
QUICK CHANGE

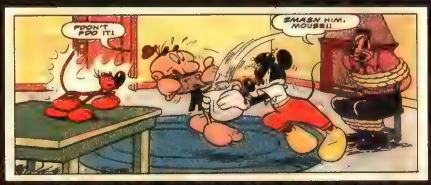
"The Case of the Vanishing Bandit" (*WDC&S* 162, 1954) is an early example of Paul Murry at work. In the early fifties Murry's art was arguably at its apex.

WDC&S led off each month with a Donald Duck ten-pager from Carl's hand; there his brilliant new characters, like inventor Gyro Gearloose and the Junior Woodchuck scout troop, continued to debut. *Donald Duck*, now bimonthly, mixed Barks with the more frequent offerings of Tony Strobl; so did *Christmas in Disneyland*, *Vacation Parade* and other seasonal specials. And then there was *Uncle Scrooge*. In testament to Barks' popularity, his own creation turned solo star in 1952. "Only a Poor Old Man" (*Four Color* #386) was the first of several one-shots before the regular series began. Like many later Scrooge sagas, "Old Man" detailed the miser's money bin and travails with the larcenous Beagle Boys. Not content beating bandits at home, though, Scrooge plumbed the world for riches in the issues after—and from Atlantis to Cibola, we were glad to go with him.

Other Disney characters offered other


AN IRON BOX FULL OF COINS! SAY!
YOU WERE RIGHT, GYRO! MY OLD RABBIT'S FOOT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH MY GOOD LUCK!
I KNEW IT ALL THE TIME!
I HAD NOTHING ON ME BUT THIS FAKE RABBIT'S FOOT WHEN I FELL THROUGH THAT HOLE IN THE WRECK AND FOUND THIS STRONG BOX!
I FELL THROUGH THE SAME HOLE, AND I FOUND OCTOPUSES!

Three Carl Barks creations—inventive Gyro Gearloose, lucky Gladstone Gander and one-of-a-kind microbot Helper—have an adventure to themselves (*Gyro Gearloose Four Color* #1047, 1959).



Hypnotized Mickey obeys the costumeless Blot, almost killing Eega Beeva and Pilip in "The Blot's Double Mystery" (*Topolino* #116/*Mickey and Donald* #8). Story by Guido Martina, art by Romano Scarpa, American dialogue by Dwight Decker.

Romano Scarpa

Romano Scarpa of Venice, Italy has been a cartooning fanatic—and a Disney aficionado—since his childhood days in the 1930s. Romano's interests led him first to an artists' academy, then to solo efforts at cartoon making. But the work that made him most famous would appear on the printed page. In the early 1950s, Romano got together with publisher Mondadori to create his own Disney comics.

Romano's Mouse stories, debuting in *Topolino* as Gottfredson's ran out, were often mistaken for those of his mentor—with their bouncy style, appearances by Eega Beeva, and emotional, exuberant Mickey, a character very close to Romano's heart. Scarpa's Duck stories, meanwhile, introduced characters of his own invention. Some, like lady tycoon Brigitta MacBridge, became permanent fixtures in European Duckburg.

Scarpa has worked for more different Disney licensees than most other major creators. Outside of Italy, he has created British stories for Odhams Press, American work for Disney itself, French stories for France's Hachétte, and most recently material for the Danes.

brands of escapism. The 1950s saw both *WDC&S* features and self-titled comics for Scamp, the pesky pup of writer Ward Greene and artist Al Hubbard; farmer gal Grandma Duck, retooled from Taliaferro origins by artists Riley Thompson and Frank McSavage; Chip 'n' Dale, most often drawn from the screen by artist Jack Bradbury; and Pluto, whose frequent scripter Don Christensen narrated doggy doings in a delightfully tongue-in-cheek style. Artists John Ushler and Alex Toth, meanwhile, drew live-action's Davy Crockett and Zorro for comics.

Then there was Mickey Mouse—and there *wasn't* Mickey Mouse. In 1949, for unexplained reasons, Western had dropped Gottfredson's daily strips from *WDC&S*, replacing them first with redrawn earlier stories, then with very weak new material. Writer Carl Fallberg and artist Paul Murry at last launched a better run of continued stories with "The Last Resort" (*WDC&S* #152-154); but the damage had been done. In the preceding few years, Mickey's image had changed.

The formerly boyish rodent, whose mishaps once lampooned repressive authority, had become a smarter, older heroic detective backing the status quo. Fallberg and Murry did build some

atmospheric, inventive cases for this Mouse: "The Vanishing Railroad" (*WDC&S* #185-187) and "The Return of the Phantom Blot" (*WDC&S* #284-287) among them. But as admirable as the new Mickey's heroism might have been, he had purchased it at the expense of character. Readers reacted by generally moving away from the Mouse, a trend that would never be fully repaired.

The same didn't happen in Italy. Like *WDC&S*, *Topolino* had a mid-1950s gap where Gottfredson stories had gone; in their case, because they'd run out of stock. Like *WDC&S*, *Topolino* filled the gap with self-made Mouse material. But unlike Western's writers, creators Martina and Romano Scarpa preserved Mickey's distinct personality. "The Blot's Double Mystery" (*Topolino* #116-119/*Mickey and Donald* #6-8), including both Floyd's fiendish Blot and "man of tomorrow" Eega Beeva, was a triumph of characterization as well as thrills. The same went for "The Mystery of Tapiocus VI" (*Topolino* #142-143/*Mickey Mouse* #256), "Mickey Mouse in the Delta Dimension" (*Topolino* #206-207) and others. And just as Barks' popularity boosted Murry, Buettner, Bradbury and others in the USA, Scarpa carried the torch for a growing Italian school of Duck and Mouse men. While Luciano Gatto, Giovan Battista Carpi and others may be little known to Americans, their work remains internationally famous today.

HE HAS SEVERAL POWERS. THE MESONS HE SENDS OUT CAN TRANSFORM ONE MATERIAL INTO ANOTHER!
ZING! ZOING!
AH! NOW I GET IT.
SURE! BLEEP-BLEEP CAN CHANGE STEEL INTO CHOCOLATE, GLASS INTO PAPER, SNOW INTO COTTON-CANDY AND SO ON!
AMAZING!
WAIT! DID YOU SAY SNOW INTO COTTON-CANDY?
YES! WHY?
VOU! DOCTOR EINMUG! YOU!
WHAT D'YOU MEAN? ME?
SO IT WAS YOU WHO CAUSED THE COTTON-CANDY AND LUMINOUS SNOWSTORMS! YOU WHO TOOK THE MILLION DOLLARS AND THREATENED A CYANIDE HARLEQUINA!
I'D BETTER EXPLAIN WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE! COME INTO MY STUDY, PLEASE!

Romano Scarpa's emotional Mickey re-encounters Gottfredson-era pal Dr. Einmug in "The Delta Dimension" (*Topolino* #206, 1959). British printing.

Other international voices also found themselves in the '50s. Dutch *Donald Duck* weekly, founded in 1952, included original Duck stories by Ed Lukacs several years later. New British *Mickey Mouse Weekly* artists—Ronald Neilson and Basil Reynolds among them—penned multiple animated feature follow-ups and a Mickey tale or three. Brazilian *Pato Donald* editor Victor Civita signed new artists to chronicle José Carioca, Disney's natty parrot-star. And Danish *Anders And & Co.*—now a weekly publication—featured an original cover on #35/1959 by one Nils Rydahl. Though a crude piece of work, it too marked the origin of a talent pool-to-be.

FIRST I MUST PREPARE A CRUCIBLE FOR THE MELTING OF MY COINS!
SPILLS COST MOLES INDEED $50,000! BUREAU DOESN'T PAY!
THE CRUCIBLE MUST BE OF THE FINEST FIRE CLAY TO RESIST THE GREAT HEAT OF THE VOLCANIC FIRES!
HEH, HEH! WHEN THIS IS LOWERED INTO THE SMOKING VOLCANO, THE COINS WILL FUSE TOGETHER LIKE PATS OF MOLTEN BUTTER!
AND THEN— AND THEN— I WILL HAVE THE POWER OF THE MIDAS TOUCH!
AN EARTHQUAKE!
I WANT A TAXI! A TELEPHONE! I CAN ANYBODY TAKE US TO VESUVIUS?

Magica De Spell arguably represents the fullest use of whimsy and unreality in Carl Barks' work. From "The Midas Touch" (*Uncle Scrooge* #36, 1962).

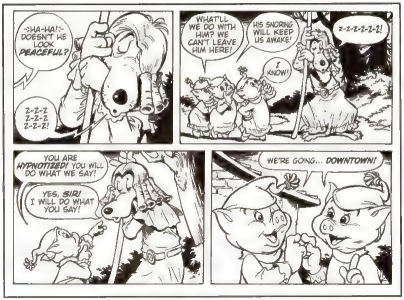
1960s: A Descent Interval

"Nothing is stationary," said Disney publications director George Sherman in

Overseas Program stories got special issues to themselves—overseas, of course. Donald, Fethry, and O. O. Duck (Walt *Disney Giant Comics* #G409, 1967) hit the stands in Australia.

1968. "There are a number of reasons that might explain the decline in circulation of comic books..." Mr. Sherman went on to gently blame television, censorious times and teenage magazines. The topic of discussion was *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*, and the tragedy—such as it was—had begun in 1960. Over the first few years of the new decade, circulation fell from 1,375,000 copies per issue to nine hundred, four hundred, finally three hundred thousand. Other Disney titles went through a similar slide.[2]

Sherman's analysis of the problem pinpoints many causes; another, however, might have been quality slippage. No golden age lasts forever. While remaining of high class and by all means professional, Western's Disney comics had begun a subtle slide in the late 1950s and kept it up, albeit slowly, thereafter.


-HA-HA!- DOESN'T HE LOOK PEACEFUL?
Z-Z-Z Z-Z-Z Z-Z-Z!
WHAT'LL WE DO WITH HIM? WE CAN'T LEAVE HIM HERE!
HIS SNORING WILL KEEP US AWAKE!
I KNOW!
Z-Z-Z-Z-Z-Z!
YOU ARE HYPNOTIZED! YOU WILL DO WHAT WE SAY!
YES, SIR! I WILL DO WHAT YOU SAY!
WE'RE GOING... DOWNTOWN!

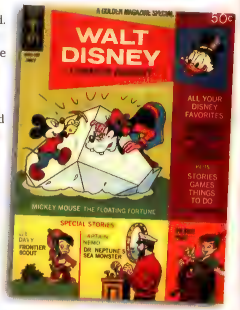
LINGUA-BIBILE!
INUTILE DISCUTERE SU QUEST'ARGOMENTO! VENGO SUBITO ALLO SCOPO DELLA MIA VISITA!
SONO QUI PER VENDERE FILTRI MAGICI! NE HO DI TUTTI I TIPI E PREZZI!
QUESTO TI PUO' INTERESSARE: È IL FILTRO DELLA BELLEZZA! UNA SPRUZZATA E DIVENTI BEL LO COME IL SOLE!
DUBITO CHE SIA VERAMENTE EFFICACE, ALTRIMENTI LO USEREBBE SU DI VOI!
SE NON DOVESSI VENDERTI UN FILTRO A TUTTI COSTI TI DAREI UNA LEZIONE CON PIOCCHI!
PASSIAMO AL FILTRO DELLA FORZA! NE BASTA UN SORSO PER DIVENTARE FORTI COME NERBOS KID! E QUI NELL'AMPOLLA C'È IL RABBIOSO SOGNO PER UN ANIMO INTERO!
A MIO PARERE, SE CONTINUERETE A SPACCIARE BIBITE PER FILTRI, NON VENDERETE MAI NIENTE A NESSUNO!
NON CREDO CHE SIANO FILTRI?

Witch Hazel wants to convince Goofy that her magic is real. But Goofy thinks she's just a poor, confused ol' lady. "Nocciola e il titolo accademico" (*Topolino* 453, 1964) by Carlo Chendi and Luciano Bottaro is one story in a famous series that continues to date.

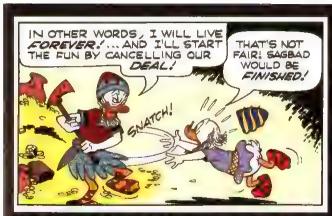
Toonder Studio artist Piet Wijn brought a special touch to 1960s Dutch Big Bad Wolf adventures. Here is a rare example of his drawing a Disney Overseas story ("Keep Your Eye on the Clock", 1967).

The signals all pointed in the same direction. Stories once aimed at everyone were now—perhaps unbeknownst to the editors—acquiring the kids-only flavor of non-Disney humor comics. Back in 1948, Barks' "Sheriff of Bullet Valley" (*Four Color* #199) made a horse opera believable by painting it as exceptional; the entire point was that the West isn't usually wild anymore. By contrast, when a 1960s Disney character went to Texas, he could simply expect to find 1860s cowboys and Indians, no questions asked. Similarly, the fairytale reality of Disney "crossover" stories—with characters from different worlds casually joining up—began to affect Ducks and Mice in standard stories too. Mickey visiting Europe would surely meet Pinocchio.

Some creators made the best of this new world. The good side of childish storytelling, after all, is the creative whimsy you can mine by doing it right. Editor Chase Craig and writer Del Connell created Goofy's secret identity of Super Goof: unbelievable for older Disney, but good satire still. *If* one accepted Mad Madam Mim the witch living in


A GOLD KEY MAGAZINE SPECIAL
50¢
WALT DISNEY
ALL YOUR DISNEY FAVORITES
PLUS 5 STORIES GAMES THINGS TO DO
MICKEY MOUSE THE FLOATING FORTUNE
SPECIAL STORIES
DONALD DUCK FRONTIER SCOUT
CAPTAIN NEMO AND DR. NEPTUNE AND THE SEA MONSTER
PLUTO

***Walt Disney's Comics Digest* was a new title for Gold Key that would survive well into the 1970s.**


IN OTHER WORDS, I WILL LIVE FOREVER!... AND I'LL START THE FUN BY CANCELLING OUR DEAL!
THAT'S NOT FAIR! BAGBAD WOULD BE FINISHED!
SNATCH!

Scrooge reenacts the deeds of his ancestors in "King Scrooge the First" (*Uncle Scrooge* #71, 1967), written by Carl Barks, pencilled by Tony Strobl, and inked by Steve Steere.

Tony Strobl

Tony Strobl started his Disney career in ways both big and small. He began in animation, with early toil on *Dumbo*'s huge pachyderms. A decade later, he turned comics freelancer with tiny Bucky Bug (*Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* #100). The two disparate creatures signify the sweep of his career: at various times, Strobl was asked to draw almost every Disney character. The Ducks, however, were his favorites. "I can handle them better," he told Klaus Strzyz in 1980; "and as a freelancer, time is money."

In his early days Strobl worked exclusively for Western, and only as an artist: "One for the Whammy" (*Donald Duck* #65) is a standout from that period, as is "King Scrooge the First" (*Uncle Scrooge* #71), a story scripted by Carl Barks. Later, Tony joined up with Disney itself to handle newspaper strips and Overseas Program stories—especially those featuring the crooked, hapless Desperate Doe Boys, Duck enemies whose final form Strobl designed. In the 1970s, toward the end of Tony's career, he also began to write some of the stories he drew. At the very end in the mid-1980s, he was a writer only.

Duckburg, then her ego, libido and wild magic were funny. Barks' Gyro stories had been unique parables of the human condition; *if* one was okay with their becoming a traditional good-versus-evil drama, Vic Lockman's hapless rival inventor Emil Eagle made a fine whimsical addition to the series. Finally, whimsy occasionally cloaked stories with some of the earlier integrity. The self-titled comics of super-genius *Ludwig Von Drake* (1961-62) and evil *Phantom Blot* (1964-66) were good examples of this.

Carl Barks, in some ways, partook of whimsy too. His great 1960s creation, Magica De Spell, is by her very nature less real than her predecessors: not just an exaggerated tightwad or bon vivant, but a self-declared sorceress with genuine magic wands. At least sometimes, however, Barks' citified reality reasserts itself. Magica's magic is sometimes fueled by mundane power sources like batteries, and her Donaldlike temper and cynicism keep her feet planted on the ground.

The ground flew out from under Dell Publishing, Western's printing partner, in 1962. In a putative effort to up their profits (not all the details are known), Western broke free and started its own imprint, Gold Key Comics. On some level, the new brand was as accepted as the old. Gold Key books like *The Beagle Boys* and *Huey, Dewey and Louie Junior Woodchucks* survived for years. The *Walt Disney Comics Digest*, including new feature-film-based stories, was also fairly successful. But the overall downward trend did not reverse, and money-saving reprints began to fill some titles.

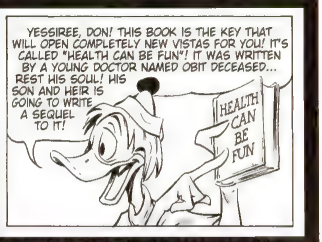
This is not to say that American Disney comics production had bottomed out. While Western began their slide, international Disney publishers were more successful than ever, and the Disney studio wanted to keep them well stocked with stories. The way to do this, starting in 1962, was the Overseas Comics Program, in which Disney itself produced comic tales for foreign use. Creators who'd worked with Western—most notably Tony Strobl—began moonlighting for Disney, joining forces with cartoon staffers to produce Duck and Mouse stories like no other.

WHY, THIS DOG IS CRAZY ABOUT ME!
NOW HOLD IT-- I'VE GOT A TERRIFIC IDEA!
CRAZY IS RIGHT... I GUESS AH'LL HAVE TO BITE YOU!
WE CAN BOTTLE THIS STUFF AND CALL IT "MOE'S PEACE POTION"!
IT DEFINITELY PEPS PEOPLE UP! YOU SAW HOW LOVABLE HOUND DOG GOT...
BUT IT'S SUPPOSED TO MAKE HIM MEAN! AH MUSTA LEFT SOMETHIN OUT!
DON'T TOUCH A THING! WE CAN SELL IT FOR A DOLLAR A BOTTLE!
NO!
AHM GONNA TASTE THIS AN SEE WHAT'S MISSIN'!
WHAL, AH DECLARE...
Y'KNOW, PODNER, WE COULD BOTTLE THIS!
I'M IN BUSINESS!

Fethry Duck and Hard Haid Moe enjoy a uniquely funny relationship. "The Medicine Man" (1968) is written by Dick Kinney, pencilled by Tony Strobl, and inked by Ellis Eringer. Like many American classics of its time, it has never appeared in an American comic book.

George Sherman, series director, outlined the plan. "We [will] use new characters in our foreign comics, characters that we don't have [in the USA].... to bring out facets of existing characters, [and to] give the stories more variety." Hence Melody Mouse, Minnie's manipulative niece, in stories drawn by Jim Fletcher, and Tabby, Donald's cynical tomcat, in various creators' works. Southern riverboat pilot Belle Duck pursued Uncle Scrooge with favors in mind—while a different kind of Dixie refugee, hillbilly hermit Hard Haid Moe, pursued the Ducks with a blunderbuss. Free-spending tycoon John D. Rockerduck had been created by Barks as a one-off Scrooge enemy (for "Boat Buster," *WDC&S* #255); now the rival revived for further contests.

And then there was Fethry Duck. Clad in a distinctive stocking cap, Donald's beatnik cousin hit readers like a bomb.


YESSIREE, DON! THIS BOOK IS THE KEY THAT WILL OPEN COMPLETELY NEW VISTAS FOR YOU! IT'S CALLED "HEALTH CAN BE FUN"! IT WAS WRITTEN BY A YOUNG DOCTOR NAMED OBIT DECEASED... REST HIS SOUL! HIS SON AND HEIR IS GOING TO WRITE A SEQUEL TO IT!
HEALTH CAN BE FUN

A prototypical Fethry Duck explains his obsession of the week. From "The Health Nut" (1964).

Dick Kinney and Al Hubbard

Writer Dick Kinney started out as a Disney cartoon gagman for his more famous director brother, Jack. His employment took him in and out of other animation studios—UPA, Lantz—for several years. In each one, his zany sense of humor fixed on the same kind of cartoon character: a cheerful pest who threw himself at others.

When Disney started its Overseas Program, Kinney was there as a writer. With artist Al Hubbard—previously famed for the doggy deeds of Scamp—Kinney created the perfect expression of his pest persona: the alternately clever and blinkered Fetlury Duck. Sometimes, the Kinney/Hubbard pest selflessly tries to improve his loved ones' lives, not knowing he's driving them crazy. Other times, he deliberately means to break them down, but determines it's for their own good.

Kinney and Hubbard created other characters, too, but the apple never fell far from the original tree. Hard Haid Moe started out as a nasty hermit, Hustler Duck as a marketing man, Belle Duck as an ex-girlfriend of Scrooge, and O. O. Duck as a super spy. In time, they all found pesky, pesky ways of throwing themselves at others.

WHY, I'M SUPERSENSITIVE 666, OUR SAFE-CRACKIN' KIN WITH THE DELICATE NERVOUS SYSTEM!
I CAN SEE WAY AIR WOULD'NT LIKE A NOISY EXHAUST!
HIS HEARING IS SO SENSITIVE THAT HE CAN HEAR SNOW FALLING!
...AND DEW DROPPING!
HI'YA, SUPERSENSITIVE 666!
SHH! I'M OVER-WORKED AND NEED QUIET AND REST!
OUR HEARTY HOWDY FLATTENED HIM OUT!

The Beagle Boys' 1960s solo comic introduced many eccentric Beagle relatives, most often created by writer Vic Lockman. "Supersensitive 666 Gets Sick-Sick-Sick" (*BB* #5, 1967) was drawn by Tony Strobl and inked by Steve Steere.

Forever following fad lifestyles and hobbies, Fethry lovingly sets out to improve Donald's existence—only to drive Don berserk with his incompetence instead. Created by Dick Kinney and Al Hubbard for "The Health Nut" (1964), Fethry returned in dozens of uniquely deranged tales. Pity, by basic studio policy, most of them went unpublished in the United States; and though Western did try to use Fethry in its own stories, they didn't capture his creative personality.

Foreign Disney publishers had their own creative personalities to deal with. Even as overseas stories ran through the press, Europeans continued to make more and more Disney tales of their own. In Italy, this involved adding new stars to the Duck and Mouse cast—many of them Scarpa creations. Brigitta MacBridge, Scrooge's businesswoman wooer, was one; Jubal Pomp, a wannabe rival of Scrooge, and Dickie Duck, the nephews' teenage gal pal, were two more. Inventiveness, of course, did not end with Scarpa. Writer Rodolfo Cimino told imaginative tales of far-off treasure hunts. Writer/artist team Carlo Chendi and Luciano Bottaro paired Goofy and Witch Hazel for a series of wild comedies. And artist Giorgio Cavazzano, from a starting point as Scarpa's inker, worked toward an entirely new Disney graphic style.

Two more new styles came to Disney comics from northern Europe. In 1961, Danish editor-in-chief Knut Dokker arranged for Nils Rydahl, artist of that 1959 *Anders And* cover, to draw stories as well. Dokker himself scripted "In The Footsteps of Rembrandt" (*Anders And* #35/1962), the first Gutenberghus Publishing Service Disney story.

Meanwhile in Holland, local editors felt there weren't enough Big Bad Wolf or Little Hiawatha stories available for their *Donald Duck* weekly. When master Dutch cartoonist Martin Toonder (*Tom Puss/Kitkat, Oliver Bumble*) produced some with his studio, the result was a classic series that lasted for several years.

Fine artist Daan Jippes drew some of his most striking covers for the 1970s Dutch Donald Duck weekly. This example from 1975 illustrates Carl Barks' classic story "Frozen Gold" (*Four Color* #62, 1945).

1970s: Donaldist Days

There was a new Disney artist imitating Carl Barks. His name was Carl Barks.

Huh?!

Thanks to old-time privacy policies, the "good Duck artist's" identity was kept from most of us readers till the late 1960s—and even then, those fans who knew the man usually didn't know his past. And the situation was even bleaker in Europe. Comics scholarship grew up there as fast as here, but little was known of Barks save his style. When it came time to define the late-1940s, early-1950s high-water mark of their favorite artist, nostalgic Duck fans didn't yet know enough to refer to "the middle period of Carl Barks." They referred, instead, to *Donaldism*.

Donaldismen (Donaldism) was also a book by Norwegian comics researcher Jon Gisle, published in 1973. The first-ever reference book on Disney comics, it was unprecedented at the time of its publication. Working with little background data, Gisle analyzed Duckburg history from the late 1940s forward, citing trends from the obvious (changes in Scrooge's personality) to the intricate (the length of Donald's beak). With the term Donaldism to describe "high Barks," Gisle defined other styles and periods by comparison: Al Hubbard Fethry stories were *Klodrismen* (Fethrism), pre-1949 Barks was *ur-Donaldismen* (ur-Donaldism).

Ur-Donaldism was also the term fans gave to Duck stories, just then appearing in Norway, which they thought to be new imitations of the early Barks style.[3] Here was where research went understandably wrong: many of these allegedly first-run stories turned out to be vintage Barks reprints, new only to Norway. Oops. The drive to correct such mistakes led "Donaldists"—as they called themselves—to get together internationally, swap comics back-issues, publish journals like Norway's *Donaldisten* (The Donaldist), and research, research, research.

In due time Donaldism infected Disney comics staffers. Lightning struck in Holland first. The local *Donald Duck* editorial team—Cees de Groot, Thom Roep and artist Daan

Daan Jippes and Fred Milton

Dutchman Daan Jippes was fascinated by comics as a child—and knew not long afterward that he must make a career of them. Hired in the early 1970s by the publisher Oberon, he initially worked for their ladies' magazine. But he slowly moved into drawing, then editing for another Oberon publication, Holland's *Donald Duck* weekly.

Master Donald struts his stuff in Milton's and Jippes' "A Clean Case of Competence" (*WDC&S* #515).

Denmark's Fred Milton was an early bloomer in comics, too. By the time he was twenty, his crime strip *Zenit* was syndicated; in 1974, he first published both the fanzine *Carl Barks & Co.* and his funny dragon comic *Gnuff*. When he next submitted original Duck scripts to Oberon, Jippes was in place to encourage him. The two soon decided they must team up—and through the early 1980s, Jippes and Milton produced one classically Barks-styled story after another.

Since the 1980s the duo have pursued individual efforts. Milton has continued to draw Duck stories for Oberon and, occasionally, the Italians. Jippes, meanwhile, has taken 1970s Carl Barks scribble-scripts for Junior Woodchuck stories—stories originally drawn by lesser artists—and re-rendered them in faithful Barks style.

PK (The Duck Avenger) and Paperinika—a superheroic Daisy—join forces in "Paperinika e il filo di Arianna" (*Topolino* #906, 1973). Story by Guido Martina, art by Giorgio Cavazzano.

AT THAT MOMENT, AT A COMIC BOOK COMPANY ACROSS TOWN...
HOWDY, MISTER EDITOR! I GOT SOMETHIN' TO TALK TUH YOU ABOUT!
UNLISTED
IF IT'S THE COUNTERFEIT COMICS, SUPER DOOP, I KNOW ALL ABOUT IT!
COUNTERFEIT COMIC BOOKS?!
QUITE TRUE! SOMEONE HAS BEEN DUPLICATING OUR PRODUCT ON THE SLY!
I'M VERY UPSET ABOUT THIS. YOU KNOW WE TRY TO MAINTAIN OUR OWN STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE!
AND YOUR COMICS ARE GOOD, TOO!

Writer Mark Evanier enjoys self-referential humor in "The Comic Book Crooks" (*Beagle Boys* #17, 1973). "Dell comics are good comics" was for many years Western's publishing slogan. Art by Kay Wright.

Jippes at Oberon Publishing—learned about Barks and struggled to publish any Barks story they hadn't seen. In the process, the team discovered and exposed their readers to Gottfredson, Gil Turner and other great past creators. Jippes and his colleagues struck out to reclaim the future too, creating new Barks-style Duck stories and Turner-style wolf tales.

Fan excitement moved on to Scandinavia. *Donaldisten*'s Danish cousin, Fred Milton's *Carl Barks & Co.* fanzine, was inspired by the Dutch developments. Then Gutenberghus comics editor Lars Bergström, a follower of the new fandom, got together with his colleagues to formally revamp their Duck production in a more classic vein. Some non-Barks 1960s characters were dropped from Gutenberghus' stories; Barks' own creations were nudged closer to the Duck Man's originals. And Gutenberghus' artists were pleased—not least up-and-coming favorite "Vicar," the Chilean Victor Arriagada Rios. Pioneering a new style, the team saw a great future ahead.

Disney comics scholarship travelled to Italy too in the 1970s, where big white books collecting Barks, Gottfredson and Taliaferro material began to appear. But Italy was, it seems, too satisfied with its own Disney style to consider further redirection. Truth be told, local creators did have many triumphs to celebrate. PK (Paperinik), a superheroic Donald also called the Duck Avenger, had been born at the end of 1969, and in the 1970s enjoyed a golden age. Created by editor Elisa Penna, written by Guido Martina, and first drawn by Giovan Battisti Carpi, PK struck a blow for anyone who'd ever pitied Donald. Acquiring a super suit really meant for Gladstone Gander, the Duck got to feel like a hero—but, ever unlucky, didn't dare announce his true identity for fear of Gladstone getting his own back. Aside from family feuds, early PK themes included Daisy Duck becoming an outspoken feminist. Aside from Carpi, early PK artists included Scarpa and the outstanding Giorgio Cavazzano.

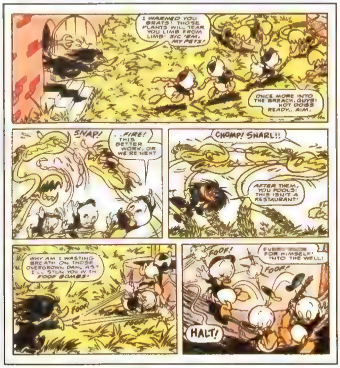
Another outstanding 1970s development took place in

Lars Bergström and Stefan Printz-Påhlson

When Swedes Lars Bergström and Stefan Printz-Påhlson talked, Danish comics production house Gutenberghus listened. Bergström, starting out as editor with the firm in 1977, made it his priority to create extra-Barkslike Duck stories—a new idea for Danish executives—and writer Printz-Påhlson agreed, himself becoming an editor a couple of years later. The early 1980s saw the flowering of the partnership, aided by artists like Vicar, Esteban and Daniel Branca.

On Bergström's and Printz-Påhlson's watches, Magica De Spell returned to chase Scrooge's first dime. Second-richest Duck Flintheart Glomgold was a regular character. Even Bolivar the St. Bernard and con artist Chisel McSue turned up again.

Bergström and Printz-Påhlson's other 1980s accomplishments included producing a famous series of Duck time travel adventures and training English comedy writers—Paul Halas, Gail Renard—to create Disney stories. Today the two editors are still very busy. Among Bergström's editorial charges is Italian Duck legend Marco Rota, while Printz-Påhlson has introduced Princess Oona, a prehistoric Duck character of his own creation.


I WARNED YOU, BEAGLE BOYS! THIS YEAR YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE IN FEAR OF MY PETS!
ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH, DOGGIES! READY, AIM...
SNAP!
FIRE! THIS BETTER BE THE NEST WE'RE NEXT
CHOMP! SNARL!!
AFTER THEM! YOU FOOLS! THAT'S A RESTAURANT!
WHY AM I WASTING BREATH ON THOSE STUPID DOGS? THEY'LL FOOD BOMBS!
FOOP!
FOOP!
FOOP!
SUBPLOT: WHERE IS DONALD? OUT INTO THE WELL!
HALT!

An early accomplishment of Gutenberghus' Lars Bergström regime was Magica De Spell's return to her roots. "The Green Attack" (*Uncle Scrooge* #221, 1987), a classic 1970s story, was plotted by Werner Wejp-Olsen, scripted by Edele Kenner, and drawn by Daniel Branca. American dialogue by Geoffrey Blum.

Giorgio Cavazzano

Lots of kids say they can't wait to grow up and start a career. A few special kids—like Giorgio Cavazzano—*don't* wait till they grow up. Venetian-born Cavazzano was only twelve when he began inking the Disney art of his cousin, Luciano Capitanio. A stint as Scarpa's inker came next; then in 1967, fully Cavazzano-drawn stories began to appear. With the onset of the 1970s, this Italian prodigy's golden age really started.

Giorgio Cavazzano draws Brigitta MacBridge in "Secret of the Incas" (*Uncle Scrooge Adventures* #53). Story by Byron Erickson.

Cavazzano didn't usually write the stories he drew, but he certainly left his mark on any story he touched. He adopted a style of loose-limbed, abstract, emotional ducks combined with sharp, realistically-rendered machinery. The style was ideal for telling an edgy, emotional story—like 1972's "Donald's Underwater Adventure" (*Topolino* #873). Writer Rodolfo Cimino's intimate tale of Donald and mer-princess Reginella is often ranked with the greatest-ever Italian Disney works.

Cavazzano's success led his style to become the benchmark for modern Italian creators. Meanwhile, Cavazzano himself no longer works just for Italy: "Secret of the Incas" (*Uncle Scrooge Adventures* #53-54) was one of several Danish partnerships.

Brazil. Donaldism hadn't struck there, but "parrotism" had: José Carioca, in locally produced stories from publisher Abril, now ranked with Donald, Mickey and Scrooge as a top-of-the-line star. José, Brazilian-born according to Disney's earliest

Walt Disney
Winnie-the-Pooh
CRUSADER ON THE LOOSE
EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE CRUSADER POOH EMERGES FROM HIS ABODE IN QUEST OF A CAUSE TO CONQUER...
TA-DAH-H WITH FLOWERS AND HERO MEDALS ON IT!
VIC SANDERS

Prolific Vic Lockman wrote all the stories in Gold Key's *Winnie the Pooh* series. Here in #11 (1979) is Crusader Pooh, a characteristic Lockman creation. Art by John Carey.

Jon Gisle's Donaldismen (1973) was the first scholarly study of Disney comics. Pictured is the Danish edition, titled *Andelogie* ("Duckology"). Cover art by Carl Barks.

newspaper strips (see *CBM* #95), now became extra-authentically so. Writer/artist Renato Canini contributed local Brazilian culture and even political humor to José's adventures; some have ranked Canini with Barks and Gottfredson as a master of Disney storytelling.

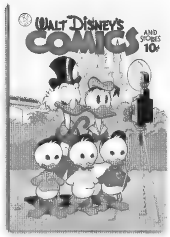
So where were we Yanks when the masters were called out? American Donaldism, though not named as such, was surely in action. Overstreet's *Comic Book Price Guide* in 1977 included a Barks cover story; that same year, Bill Blackbeard's *Smithsonian Book of Newspaper Comics* discussed Gottfredson and reprinted an epic Mickey story in full. A Disney comics fanzine, John Nichols' *Barks Collector*, began in 1976, and animation researcher Mike Barrier serialized a Barks bibliography in his journal *Funnyworld*. Carl Barks himself was also busy with fans. From 1971, Disney allowed the now-retired Duck Man to paint Donald, Scrooge and company in oils, and a one-man cottage industry was the result.

Little of this activity spilled over to Gold Key. The Italian big white books became Abbeville Press' *Walt Disney Best Comics* series (1978-1983), but the stories were often censored and Western itself only tangentially involved.[4] Gold Key had put out four reprint albums, *The Best of Walt Disney Comics*, in 1974—three Barks albums, one Gottfredson—but while the creators had received credits for the first time in America, the stories were again censored and the concept abandoned afterward.

Meanwhile, general Gold Key circulation slid ever further, and new titles like *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *Aristokittens* did not reverse the trend. Some *Super Goof* issues of the era featured clever scripts by Mark Evanier, but other new stories reflected the less-successful creations of the 1960s. Meanwhile, excepting Paul Murry, many classic Western artists had either retired or now worked for Disney only. Those remaining tended to draw in a coloring-book style; for readers, the general perception was one of lowered quality. Editors, apparently, disagreed: when Fred Milton submitted a strongly Barks-inspired Donald story to Western—"The Big Sneeze"—it was rejected for its old-fashioned look.

Who could guess that in just a few years, the philosophy behind these decisions would undergo a radical reversal?

1980s: A Gander at Gladstone



The Duck Man rendered new drawings of his stars for some *Carl Barks Library* slipcases. Here, Set VIII keeps every duck's eye on the camera except...

The 1980s in American Disneydom began with a whimper. Western Publishing's comic books had reached a low point. Unsellable on the newsstands, from February 1980 the issues were made available only to toy stores, only sealed in bagged groups of three. Only, too, with a new "Whitman" imprint: the Gold Key symbol was now retired. By 1984, so would be Western's entire comics line.

But Disney fans with printing presses were active elsewhere in the USA. 1980 saw collectors Russ Cochran and Bruce Hamilton form the publishing house Another Rainbow. Personal friends of Barks, Cochran and Hamilton named the company for Barks' Scrooge painting "Always Another Rainbow" (1974); and true to that moniker, their first publication was *The Fine Art of Walt Disney's Donald Duck* (1980), a luxurious book collecting Barks' Duck paintings to date. Another Rainbow followed up by commissioning new Duck oils from Barks for issue as lithographs. Then—master-minded also by production manager Byron Erickson, art director Gary Leach, and art assistant John Clark—came something even more exciting: *The Carl Barks Library*, patterned after Russ Cochran's *EC Library*.

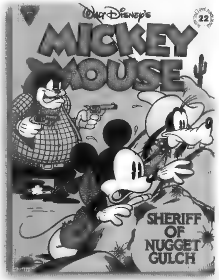
Daan Jippes also did a lot of original work just for Gladstone. This classic cover appeared on *WDC&S* #519 (1987).

Thirty volumes in ten slipcases released over seven years, the *Barks Library* reproduced the entirety of Barks' Duck work from the best photostats Another Rainbow could acquire. True: a few stories, no longer available as stats, had to be reproduced from traced or restored originals, and family-minded Disney asked for censorship to a couple more. But the vast majority of Barks stories were there as Carl created them.

HOW COME YOU'RE NOT AT TRAPDOOR SQUAT'S THE WHOLE TOWN'S THERE FOR THE "FESTIVAL OF THE FOOT"
TRAPDOOR SQUAT'S THAT'S IT!
BEAUTIFUL MONEY! WAIT FOR DONALD DUCK!
THE FESTIVAL WAS WRONG AS USUAL. THE PACKED STANDS GAVE TESTIMONY TO THE FACT THAT THE CITIZENS OF DUCKBURG
A-AH, BLAH BLAH... AND I CAN SEE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN THAT YOU ALL HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT
"VERY CHARMING LADIES, HAVE PROMISED TO ENTERTAIN ME SO PRIVATELY ON THANKS, THIS VERY AFTER NOON! I'LL SEE THEM
BRONX CHEER CLAP!
AND THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE DAY'S EVENTS WILL BE THE DANCE OF THE THREE MAPE-WORMED MOON MAIDS
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO AVOID THE KIDS LIKE THE PLAGUE!
DUCKBURG IS PROUD OF YOU!
I ALMOST FORGOT TO MENTION THAT THE OFFICERS OF THE DO-GOODERS LEAGUE ALSO PREPARED A HEARTY WELCOME!
I WON'T THERE MORE GENTS I DON'T WANT TO SEE

Fred Milton's and Daan Jippes' supremely cynical "The Do-Gooders' League" opened out Gladstone's first issue of *WDC&S* (#511, 1986).

It would seem hard to top the *Barks Library*, Disney comics' most intricate tribute to its history. Another Rainbow topped it by taking over the American Disney comic book license from Western. With Erickson installed as editor-in-chief, the first of the standard "Gladstone" line—*Mickey Mouse* #219, *Donald Duck* #246, *Uncle Scrooge* #210 and *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* #511—appeared in 1986.[5] These comic books did something unprecedented: they made international Disney stories regularly available to American readers.



Gladstone's Mickey Mouse title featured a windfall of classic Gottfredson material. So did the Mickey issues of Gladstone Comic Album: "Sheriff of Nugget Gulch" (*GCA* #22, 1989) is pictured here. Cover art by Murad Gumen.

The difference

Donald, Scrooge and the boys confront Italian bandit Fra Diavolo in Branca's "The Twelfth Caesarius" (*Uncle Scrooge Adventures* #7, 1988). Story by Per Wiking and Tom Anderson, American dialogue by Geoffrey Blum.

Daniel Branca

Thanks to old-time Gutenberghus policy, Danish stories appeared creditless in 1980s Gladstone comics. Only later did fans learn that a series of especially admired, deftly brushed stories—stories like "The Twelfth Caesarius" (*Uncle Scrooge Adventures* #7) and "The Sunken Chest" (*Uncle Scrooge* #212)—were drawn by Daniel Branca.

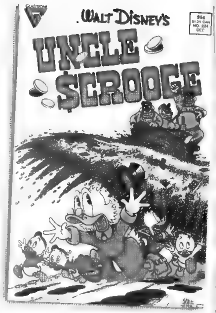
Argentinian-born Daniel, through artistic accident, didn't plan on a Disney-related adulthood. When he first drew comics as a teen, they were educational strips for a children's magazine. His start with Disney comics in 1977 came only because an art agency he'd joined—Bardon Art—just happened to be making them for Gutenberghus.

That said, Branca grew to like the work, and after a two-year 1980s hiatus to study painting, he actively sought Ducks to return to. Branca also lists personal favorites to draw among the Disney cast. Did you guess they were Magica and the Beagle Boys?

Aside from being a cartoonist, Branca has painted cubist art for gallery exhibitions since his early 1980s studies. It's only fitting that many of Branca's best comics appeared in the USA with the extra-artistic, highly literate dialogue of Geoffrey Blum.

from Western was like night and day. Gladstone's *WDC&S* began by offering Jippes' and Milton's 1970s Dutch classics, the highly ironic "Do-Gooders' League" (*WDC&S* #511) and "Success Test" (*WDC&S* #512) coming first. *Donald Duck* and *Uncle Scrooge* mixed the current Dutch stories of writer Jan Kruse, artist Ben Verhagen and others with the dynamic works of Gutenberghus' Bergström regime—identified only, by Danish policy of the time, as Gutenberghus. Finally, *Mickey Mouse* took an unprecedented tack: classic Gottfredson was the cover attraction, promoted with the kind of excitement that really built interest in Mickey as a character. A few years later, Scarpa's 1950s stories were featured in the title as well.

High quality had the desired effect. Sales breezed back up to an acceptable level. *Gladstone Comic Albums*, letter-size paperback collections of classics, supplemented the regular newsstand titles. And Donaldistic foreign stories inspired modern American comics professionals: if Jippes and Milton could do this, why couldn't we? With an editorial staff visibly more interested in classicism than was Western, the sky



An impressive—and early—cover by Don Rosa illustrates his "Cash Flow" (*US* #224, 1987).

seemed like the limit.

"Big Feet!" (*DD* #249), a one-off effort by Marty Greim, was the first new story made for Gladstone. The second, "The Son of the Sun" by Don Rosa (*US* #219), was the one that grabbed headlines. With his penchant for emotional (and cynical) characters, historical authenticity and detailed artwork, Rosa set his favorite character—Scrooge—on the first of many lovingly intricate treasure quests. And where Rosa excelled at drama, other Gladstone creators turned masters of comic disaster. Canadian William Van Horn and part-time co-author John Lustig began working for the Ducks a year after Rosa, and dived into a number of slapstick

Don Rosa

When Gladstone comics appeared on newsstands in 1986, Keno Don Rosa saw his manifest destiny flashing before his eyes. As has often been recounted, he told editor Byron Erickson that he was born to write and draw Uncle Scrooge"—and got a chance to prove it. Only a few months later, Rosa's "The Son of the Sun" (*Uncle Scrooge* #219) was in print. The hit-making debut story also established Don's tradition of reviving classic Barks situations and bit players, as a vicuna hunter from "Lost in the Andes" (*Four Color* #223) made a gag reappearance.

Second-richest duck Flintheart Glomgold gets his due in "The Son of the Sun" (*Uncle Scrooge* #219, 1987).

With time, Barksian references grew for Don into a more unwieldy fleshed-out Duck continuity, one which is touched on directly or indirectly in much of his work. In stories first created for Gladstone, then the Dutch, Danes, and sometimes French publishers, Keno has told us more and more about Scrooge's family, his foes and his secrets. The Eisner-winning "Life and Times of Scrooge McDuck" series (*US* #285-296), built especially for the purposes of such fleshing-out, is often seen as his magnum opus. In between times, of course, Rosa has also provided some classic—and scientifically founded—Duck and McDuck gag stories.

I'M READY AN' RARIN' TO GO, GANG! WHERE'S THEIR PLANE?
RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU!
SEE?
THAT'S A PLANE? IT AIN'T NO BIGGER THAN A FLY!
EXACTLY! WITH ITS SIZE, THE WUZZLES WILL REVOLUTIONIZE AERIAL ESPIONAGE! I'LL MAKE MILLIONTIZERS OBSOLETE!
HOW'D IT GET SO SMALL?
I MINIATURIZED IT WITH MY NEW REVERSIBLE REDUCTO RAY.
VERY CLEVER! BUT WHERE ARE YOU GONNA FIND A PILOT THIS SIZE FOR A PLANE?
THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT!
OH, NO! YOU AREN'T GONNA SHRINK ME DOWN TO THIS SIZE OF NO DOUBT, RUIN MY SOCIAL LIFE!

The major new duck character created for DuckTales was fearless—and crash-prone—pilot Launchpad McQuack. In "Seeing the Blight" (DuckTales #5, 1989), William Van Horn gives Launchpad his marching orders.

scenarios. In his early days, Van Horn was surely the first Duck creator to costume Donald's nephews as ninjas ("Fly Now, Pay Later," *DD* #263).

One thing Gladstone didn't have going for it was page count. When an early attempt to publish digests fizzled, 48-page albums and 32-page comics became the rule—precluding the use of most Italian stories, long as they typically were. So what did we miss out on from 1980s Italy? Writer/artist Massimo De Vita enjoyed showing Mickey and Goofy in parallel worlds and other times; multiple *Star Wars* pastiches and the fantasy-based "Sword of Ice" (*Topolino* #1411-1413) were some of his works. Writer Giorgio Figus sent Donald and Fethry out as "P. I. A." operatives—secret agents for Scrooge in a Duckburg subseries. Writer Maria Uggetti and artist Bruno Sarda introduced another spin-off in Arizona Goof, Goofy's intrepid archaeologist cousin.

If Gladstone largely passed over Italy, it did take material from Disney's Overseas Program—now typically called the Studio Program. The Wuzzles, combination animals from Disney TV Animation's "Land of Wuz," appeared in stories from Tom Yakutis and the Jaime Diaz Studio. Disney was also producing a second series for TV, *DuckTales*; when Gladstone began a tie-in comic, relevant Studio stories appeared in it too.

DuckTales was itself a phenomenon. The daily animated half-hour marked a daring attempt to make something new out of Barks: Scrooge adventures with Huey, Dewey and Louie, with newly-created airplane pilot Launchpad McQuack... and without Donald, whom it was feared would steal the spotlight. The series had been conceived before Gladstone's Barks revival, so perhaps producer Alan Zaslove felt fidelity to be less necessary. For all that, though, the cartoon was frequently creative, almost always enjoyable, and a boon to Gladstone along the way.

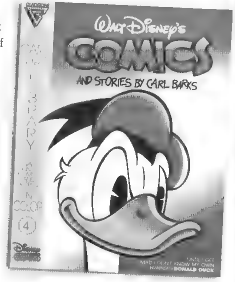
So popular was *DuckTales*, in fact, that together with the success of the 1988 feature film *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, it greatly raised the Disney company's awareness of its classic characters and their value to the studio. In various ways, this new awareness would affect the future of Disney comics in the years that followed. It finally led to Disney deciding that what Gladstone was doing well, Disney would like to do better.

1990s: Rises and Falls of Donald Duck

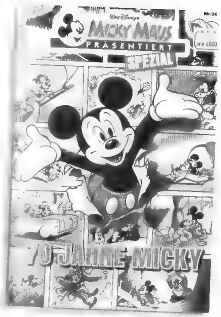
"All the ducks come home to roost," read the ads. "This could be the start of something big!" Revoking Gladstone's comics license in early 1990, WD Publications assembled talent from Gladstone, DC, Marvel and the Studio Program to produce its own titles as Disney Comics, Inc. The justification was simple: a successful in-house comics line meant more profit for Disney than did an outside licensee. Some executives also felt that Disney comics, though successful under Gladstone, would be even bigger hits if they featured modern Disney TV characters. Now Disney could test this theory.

Under editor-in-chief Len Wein, the new line-up looked impressive at first glance. TV-driven *Chip 'n' Dale Rescue Rangers* and *TaleSpin* offered the anthropomorphic action of rodents fighting animal crime and *Jungle Book* critters running a 1930s air cargo service, respectively. Though many stories were full of interesting characterization—Tom and Mary Bierbaum's "For the Love of Cheese" (*CDRR* #17) was a benchmark—the art, divided among multiple inkers, garnered mixed reviews.

Roger Rabbit was, from initial comic shop orders, perceived as Disney's most successful title. The lead-off stories' efforts to mix humans with 'toons came across a little inconsistently. Often more acclaimed were the wild backup pieces, usually set in ToonTown, written by Doug Rice and drawn by Bill Langley.



***The Carl Barks Library in Color* (1992-1998) generally featured covers by Bruce Hamilton, pasted up from Carl Barks clip art.**



The spirit of Egmont's "New Mickey" stories is well captured in this cover by Cesar Ferioli—incorporating some classic Gottfredson and Murry designs (*70 Jahre Micky*, 1998).

Goofy Adventures was chock full of then-current international production. The book's concept—Goofy acting the role of historical and pop culture figures—lent itself to the "Disney's Goofy Classics" series, Studio Program stories on that theme produced in the 1980s. But also appearing in *GA* were all-new stories by artist Rick Hoover and Danish, Italian and French material. Massimo De Vita, Gutenberghus' Cesar Ferioli and France's Claude Marin were showcased. Arizona Goof and the French James Goof (a Goofy impersonation of James Bond) also made their American debuts.

The plan for *Mickey Mouse Adventures* was to mix 1980s Gutenberghus stories—often Fallberg style-imitations—with self-produced Mouse stories. Disney's restrictions on corporate symbol Mickey apparently made that self-production difficult. But some stories ended up memorable anyway; two in particular, both drawn by Stephen DeStefano and Gary Martin, were Michael T. Gilbert's "Riddle of the Runaway Sphinx" (*MMA* #2) and Lee Nordling's "Phantom Blot Bedtime Story" (*MMA* #7-8).

Bedtime for Disney, alas, came shortly after. One year into publication, sales figures revealed that executives' predictions had been wrong. The new titles they had believed would sell so well—even *Roger Rabbit*—were now selling very badly. In what fans called the "Disney implosion," Len Wein left WD Publications; newly-launched series became miniseries, and the standard comics line was slashed down to three titles.

These titles were *Uncle Scrooge*, *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* and *Donald Duck Adventures* (Disney had no *Donald Duck*). Edited by Donald newspaper strip writer Bob Foster, the books had done well since the 1990 launch without slowing down. Now Foster had more freedom to fill them with what he liked: Barks and Gottfredson rarities in *WDC&S*, Italian Duck artist Marco Rota in *Scrooge* ("The Money Ocean," *US* #266-267), and a number of well-picked Gutenberghus stories—Americanized in the Gladstone tradition—for all the titles. There was only one drawback. Prior to the "implosion," Foster had commissioned new stories from William Van Horn. Now Disney management, burned by the greater comics line's failure, cut the budget for purchase of new material. Where would Van Horn, at the height of his powers, go now?

The answer, as it happened, was where many American Disney comics creators were going: Gutenberghus in Denmark, now renamed Egmont Comic Creation. Egmont had added Gladstone's Byron Erickson to its editorial staff in 1991. Now Erickson, with Lars Bergström and Stefan Printz-Påhlson, worked to bring a Yankee school of freelance talent to the company. These creators had begun with Don Rosa before Erickson's own arrival. As the '90s went on, they included Michael T. and Janet Gilbert, John Blair Moore, John Lustig, Dave Rawson, Pat McGreal and your present author, David Gerstein, many of whom had first worked for Bob Foster. And Foster came to Egmont, too, leaving Disney in 1992 to begin several years as an in-house Copenhagen editor.

The writing was on the wall for the crew remaining in Burbank. Though Foster replacement Cris Palomino kept the comics' standards high, management felt they would never become as successful as was once hoped. In 1993, Disney stopped self-publishing. The license for feature film and TV characters was given to Marvel. The Ducks and Mice moved back to Gladstone.

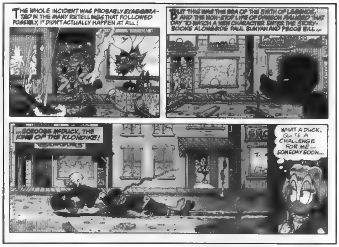
Marvel's "modern Disney" titles—*Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin* among them—were not a financial success. Neither were the comics of Acclaim, who got the "modern" license next and tried micro-marketing separate digests for girls (*Disney's Enchanting Stories*) and boys (*Disney's Action Club*).

William Van Horn

Toiling decades ago in an animation studio on kids' films that needed rewrites, William Van Horn had to retool the dialogue himself, learning as he went along. The job left him with a talent he could put to work in children's books (*Harry Hoyle's Giant Jumping Bean*, 1978), other freelance writing...and comics. Van Horn's first funny-page effort, *Nervous Rex* the dinosaur, made way for ducks as Bill signed on with Gladstone's Byron Erickson in 1988, then with Disney Comics' Bob Foster in 1990.

William Van Horn combines the swagger of the classic Donald Duck with a Seussian screwball touch. "From Whoo We Came" appeared in *WDC&S* #604 (1996).

Bill's initial Gladstone stories included a large number of one-page strips and *DuckTales* Launchpad McQuack sagas. Under Bob Foster, this changed to a monthly gig of Barks-style Donald lead-off stories—a pattern that continues today, despite a sea-change to Egmont in 1992. Mixing Barksian personality with out-of-control silliness, Van Horn creates a Duckburg full of mocking irony and hooney frustrations for Donald and Scrooge. Van Horn also creates duck characters of his own. Scrooge's lazy half-brother Rumpus McFowl, cat-faced con man Wrinkly Filcher and Baron Itzy Bitzy, the legendary whistling flea, are all Van Horn inventions.


THE WHOLE INCIDENT WAS PROBABLY EVAPORATED BUT IN THE AWAY DETAILS WERE PUT TOGETHER, POSSIBLY IT DIDN'T ACTUALLY HAPPEN AT ALL!
WHAT THIS WAS THE 88th OF THE SIXTH OF LABRADOR AND THE NON-STOP LINE OF FASHION FEATURED "HAT DAY" TO BRUSH A FEW CHARACTERS BEFORE THE STORY... BOOKS ALONGSIDE FALL BARYON AND FRIDGE BALL...
SCROOGE MCDUCK, THE KING OF THE KLONDIKE!
GOOFONOMICS
WHAT A DUCK, EH? TO A CHALLENGE, NOW ME, SOMEDAY SOON...

"King of the Klondike" (*US* #292, 1995) shows the legendary tone with which Don Rosa pictured Scrooge's most immortal deeds—and invoked classic Barks supporting characters for his Life and Times of Scrooge McDuck series.

Gladstone, however, had nothing if not staying power. Editor of the new books was John Clark, with Gary Leach as art director and Sue Daigle-Leach as production manager.

"Gladstone II" started out with a familiar feel. A new paperback series, *The Carl Barks Library in Color*, combined the content of the hardback *CBL* with the style of the 1980s *Gladstone Comic Albums*. As for the standard comics, publisher Bruce Hamilton sprinkled *Donald and Mickey* with his own favorite stories; "Disney's Goofy Classics," for example, appeared with his articles of endorsement. *Donald Duck*, now an all-reprint book, began a chronological study of Al Taliaferro's newspaper strip. *Uncle Scrooge*, *Donald Duck Adventures* and *Uncle Scrooge Adventures* looked ahead, with Clark and Leach picking first-run Scarpa and Egmont material. Oberon, too, had highlights in the 1990s; some—like the modern works of Jippes, writer Frank Jonker and artist brothers Mau and Bas Heymans—were represented in the Gladstone line.

Then came Don Rosa and William Van Horn. Van Horn, having produced classic-style Donald Duck short stories for Bob Foster, continued them for Egmont as ten-pagers. Now one a month rubbed elbows with Gottfredson reprints in *WDC&S*. Van Horn also collaborated with Carl Barks on the latter's newly-scripted story, "Horsing Around with History" (*USA* #33). Rosa, meanwhile, constructed his magnum opus: "The Life and Times of Scrooge McDuck," a twelve-part Egmont miniseries founded on Barks' Scrooge factoids. The saga spun through *US* #285-296, going on to win an Eisner Award for its creator. Subsequently celebrated at many a European comics convention, Don let his fandom fuel some "Life of Scrooge" Danish follow-ups as well.

YOU TOLD ME YOURSELF, BLOT! I MENTIONED THAT P.I.'S HAD IN TROUBLE...
BUT THAT WASN'T YOU, WEBSLEY! WHO YOU SEEMED TO BE...
NOTHING BULL-NOW IT SEEMED IT WAS ALL RIGHT!
AND SO, ONCE AGAIN, THE WHITE KNIGHT HAS SAVED AND HIS LADY'S NAME AND JUSTICE OF THE GOOD KING!
BUT DADDY, WHAT ABOUT THE GOOD KING?
NOW, DON'T WORRY, DEAR! I'M SURE HE'LL BE HAPPY IN A...

It's all in the family for the Phantom Blot in Lee Nordling's "Phantom Blot Bedtime Story" (Mickey Mouse Adventures #8, 1991). Art by Gary Martin.

Byron Erickson

Initially Another Rainbow's *Carl Barks Library* production manager, Byron Erickson turned editor-in-chief for Gladstone's 1980s newsstand comics. When Don Rosa and William Van Horn wanted to write and draw Ducks, Erickson coached them and refined their storytelling. When European Disney tales found their American voices in Geoffrey Blum's literature-inspired dialogue, Erickson reached for the dictionary. Perhaps most critically, Erickson's devotion to Gottfredson's Mickey Mouse was the deciding factor behind Gladstone's successful use of those stories.

In the 1990s Erickson became an editor and creative director at Denmark's Egmont Comic Creation, where he remains today. Aside from continuing to work with Rosa and Van Horn, Erickson rebuilt Mickey—once just a secondary figure at Egmont—back into the adventure hero of 1930s yore. Erickson's "Fantasy Island" (*Walt Disney Giant* #5), combining his own writing with Cesar Ferioli's art, was the first of many successful "new Mickey" classics by modern Egmont creators. Erickson has also written "World of the Dragonlords," a recent Duck fantasy miniseries, for artist Giorgio Cavazzano.

A few new creators reported directly to Gladstone. Patrick Block, comic art aficionado, began drawing his own Duck tales directly for editor Clark with "The Mystery of Widow's Gap" (*DDA* #27). Ron Fernandez scripted the first few stories, bringing back Witch Hazel in "Too Late for Christmas" (*DDA* #30); Block's wife Shelly took over as writer afterwards. A short time later, however, the Blocks—like many before them—moved on from the American market to work for Egmont. In 1996, it seemed like everyone was doing it.

Egmont in the mid-1990s had a larger audience than ever before—a growing number of subsidiaries around Europe and

Asia—and produced more stories than before, too. Many of these stories took Disney characters in new directions. Byron Erickson wrote the first "new Mickey" stories for artist Cesar Ferioli in 1993; these tales, re-costuming Mickey in his Gottfredson two-button shorts, also brought the Mouse's grit, humor and optimism back from daily strip limbo. Now Erickson taught some North American freelancers to do the same: John Lustig, Stefan Petrucha ("The X-Files") and William Van Horn's artist/writer son Noel. By the late 1990s, other Egmont writers, artists and editors also crafted "new Mickey" stories, the most popular Mouse works Egmont had ever printed. And the Ducks were moving ahead, too. Editors Stefan and Unn Printz-Påhlson created cave-duck Princess Oona; writer Andreas Pihl expounded "The Rise and Fall of Donald Duck" in a fan-favorite *Anders And* miniseries. Finnish writer/artist Kari Korhonen brought Gyro Gearloose to inventive new heights. Dane Lars Jensen and American Stefan Petrucha created Kinneylike Fethry adventures, while with Lars Bergström, Italian Marco Rota told tales of a doughty Donald ancestor—the Briton Andold Wild Duck—and his fight against the Vikings.

Some, but hardly all, of these stories made it Stateside. In 1996, Gladstone's *WDC&S* became a 64-page prestige-format title, the seemingly ideal spot for international variety. "New Mickey" and other modern European stories duly did appear there. But the prestige *WDC&S* was the Prescott, Arizona comics firm's last hurrah. Gladstone II sales, while at times better than Disney's, were below the '80s level. Sales flinched further when new distribution rules, levelled by both Disney and magazine distribution firms, effectively cut Gladstone off: from its international market in 1997, from newsstands in 1998. At the end of that year, with only *WDC&S* and a prestige *Uncle Scrooge* left to sell, Gladstone II let its Disney contract lapse.

Less than two years later, the great Carl Barks passed away.

THE DOGGY DIN THAT FOLLOWS IS LOUD ENOUGH TO WAKE EVEN BEAT-TIRED DONALD!
OH, MY TUCKERED PEEPERS! IS IT TIME TO GET UP ALREADY?
BARK!
SNARL! GROWL!
I KNOW YOU'RE THERE, BOYS! I CAN HEAR YOU BREATHING! SO STOP LOAFIN' AND GET UP! IT'S TIME TO
MUSH!
AAARFGH!
AARFGH!

Patrick Block's duck art included "Somewhere in Nowhere" (*Tesori* #3, 2000), one of the final stories to be plotted by Carl Barks.

With the right kind of promotion, drive and personal interest, Gemstone has the opportunity to treat us to a wide, rich variety of international stories both vintage and fresh. Coffers around Europe and the world hold not just classics we'd like to enjoy again, but great numbers of exciting Duck, Mouse and other Disney adventures we've never read—and that we perhaps will get to know, if the audience is there.

The next few years could be an exciting time.

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The author would like to thank Lars Bergström, John Clark, Russ Cochran, Byron Erickson, Harry Fluks, Larry Gerstein, Jon Gisle, Joakim Gunnarsson, Lars Jensen, Thomas Jensen, Martin Olsen, Stefan and Unn Printz-Påhlson, Don Rosa, and William Van Horn for their help and support.

David Gerstein is a comics story editor and researcher for Egmont Creative A/S. He lives in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Into the Future

In the tradition of Mickey Mouse's optimism, however, it's exciting to end Disney comics' story in our country on a positive note. After several years of hoping and wondering, Steve Geppi and Gemstone Publishing—*CBM*'s own parent company—have a license to publish new Disney comics, and the first of their new line should be available as you read this. The Gladstone II nucleus of John Clark, Gary Leach and Sue Daigle-Leach has relocated to Timonium, Maryland, where new titles are now in the works. Prestige *WDC&S* and *Uncle Scrooge* will pick up where the old line left off, with newsstand and digest titles returning to boot. At this point, it's difficult to know what kind of success they will have; but with positive opening signs from retailers and from Disney itself, a fighting chance seems likely.

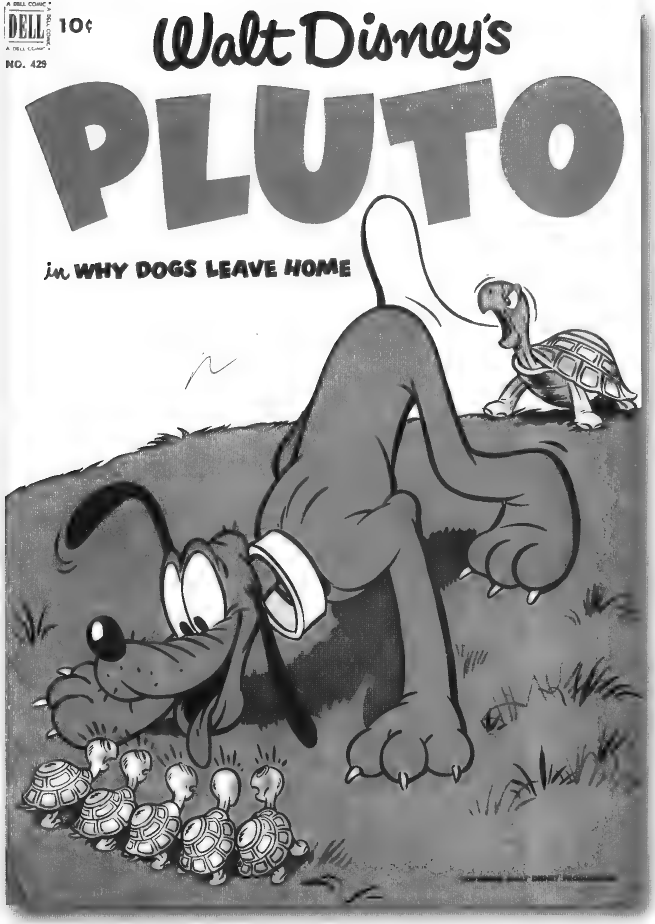
[1] Carl Barks, "The Duck Man." Interview by Malcolm Willits, Don Thompson and Maggie Thompson. *Comic Art* #7, 1968.

[2] George Sherman. Interview by Malcolm Willits. *Vanguard* #2, 1968

[3] Pål Jensen, "Hva skjedde I første halvdel av 1973?" *Donaldisten* #1/1973.

[4] The Abbeville Press edition of *Qui, Quo, Qua* (*Donald Duck And His Nepheus*, 1983) uses a contemporary Western cover design. No other evidence of Western's contributions to the volumes are known to this author.

[5] The first Gladstone comics per se, *Uncle Scrooge Goes to Disneyland* and *Disneyland Birthday Party*—each issued both as a standard-size comic and as a digest—appeared the previous year.


A DELL COMIC
DELL
10¢
NO. 429
Walt Disney's
PLUTO
in WHY DOGS LEAVE HOME

JACK BRADBURY

An Interview with a Funny-Animal Maestro

by Alberto Becattini

Born in Seattle, Washington, on December 27, 1914, John Morin (Jack) Bradbury is undoubtedly one of the greatest funny-animal comic artists of all time as well as one of the sweetest men I have ever known. For 35 years, his unmistakable style graced countless characters, including several he had previously worked on as an animator. But let the master artist himself, clear-minded as ever at 88 years old, speak about his astonishing achievements. Enjoy!

Alberto Becattini: Well, Jack, let's start from scratch. Could you give me a synthetic "portrait of the artist as a young man"?

Jack Bradbury: Well, I can say that I got interested in cartooning when I was 10 or 11. That's when I first began to sketch, and the only art training I had was in grammar and high school. It was reading the newspaper comic strips of the day that made me want to be a cartoonist. I read all the popular strips of the day—*Bringing Up Father*, *The Gumps*, *Little Orphan Annie*—but my special favorites were Cliff Sterrett's *Polly and Her Pals* and Roy Crane's *Wash Tubbs*. I literally fell in love with Crane's strip. I was carrying a paper route in my second year in high school, and it's in that paper, the *Seattle Star*, that I discovered *Wash Tubbs*. I just couldn't wait to read each daily episode.

In this 1981 self-caricature, Bradbury is surrounded by some of his best-known characters. Goofy, Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse © Disney; Stanley and Spunky © Standard

Becattini: How did you become interested in animation?

Bradbury: In the summer of 1934, Disney's *The Three Little Pigs* was causing quite a sensation in my hometown, Seattle, and I rushed to see it. I couldn't help but be impressed and interested. One of the Disney directors, Ben Sharpsteen, was visiting friends in Seattle that summer, and through them I heard that the Disney Studio was planning to enlarge its staff in preparation for bigger things, the first of which was to be a feature picture, *Snow White*. I immediately wrote to the Studio and sent samples of my work. The answer I soon received was encouraging. "Come down for a two week try-out period and see if you are capable of doing this kind of work." So, at age 19, late in October 1934, I left Seattle with a one-way bus ticket to California with about $50 in my pocket, and appeared several days later at the old Hyperion Avenue studio in Hollywood. I started out as an in-betweener, filling in drawings in-between other drawings done by animators and assistant animators. By the end of my two-week period I had mastered it well enough to be put on the payroll and start working at the magnificent sum of $15 a week. Not much money, but happily it didn't take much for a young cartoonist to live on in those days.

Becattini: What was the atmosphere like at Disney in those days?

Bradbury: It was great. A wonderful, light-hearted spirit prevailed throughout the Studio, and along with the fun and frolics, there was the sincere desire of everyone to make Disney cartoons the very best seen on the theatre screens. As beginners, we were all working in a large room together, doing in-betweens and breakdown drawings. Along with this daily work, we were privileged to take part in a training program. Several times a week we spent part of our day in an art class,

© Disney Enterprises Inc.

"Butch" O'Sparrow
NOW WATCH THAT NASTY TEMPER O' YERS, BUTCH! I WANT YE TO STOP YER FIGHTIN' AN' BRAWLIN'!
NEVER YA MIND, WOMAN! I KNOW HOW TA TAKE CARE O' MESELF!
Jack Bradbury.
THOUGH I WOULDN'T WANT HER TA KNOW IT, I'M JEST A-FEELIN' PRIME FOR A GOOD FIGHT!
THESE SNAPPY MORNINS GIVE A TINGLE TA ME YOUNG BLOOD!

"Butch" O'Sparrow splash from *Coo Coo* #25, May 1946. © Standard

drawing from a live model, and one full morning a week was spent at the zoo, sketching live animals. All this was done under the expert, watchful eye of a very fine instructor, Don Graham.

Becattini: What were some of the early Disney cartoons you worked on?

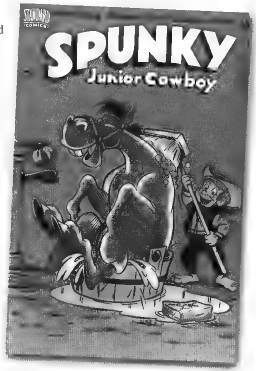
Bradbury: Among the first ones I worked on was a Silly Symphony cartoon, *The Tortoise and the Hare* (released January 5, 1935), and a Mickey Mouse cartoon, *The Band Concert* (released February 23, 1935). I recall we were asked to put in considerable overtime on that, which was rewarded with vouchers for a dinner at Leslie's, a little restaurant on Vermont Avenue in Hollywood. By the beginning of the next summer I had apparently improved enough to be offered a seven-year contract, which also called for definite raises every three months for the first few years, then every six months after that. In late 1935 I became an assistant animator. For a year, I was assistant to Robert Wickersham—whom we called "Bob Wick"—on several shorts, including *Thru the Mirror* (a Mickey Mouse cartoon, released May 30, 1936) and the Oscar-winning *The Old Mill* (a Silly Symphony cartoon, released November 5, 1937). When Bob Wick decided to leave Disney and go with the Fleischer Studio, I was reassigned with two other assistants, Don Lusk and Ken Hultgren, to assist animators Milt Kahl, Eric Larson and Jim Algar on *Snow White*. These men were to animate all the animals in the picture, and in some scenes there were as many as thirty active little creatures on every drawing.

Becattini: Was it during that period that you became a full-fledged animator?

Bradbury: Yes. Nearing the end of our assignment on *Snow White*, a number of the young would-be animators were given one scene each to animate in a short titled *The Barnyard Symphony* (released October 14, 1938). My scene was a short one of a bull adding his voice to a chorus of other animals singing, more or less harmoniously, in a barnyard group. Actually, I became a full-time animator after doing a try-out scene of one man's awkward efforts at playing tennis. I showed it to Ham Luske, a top animator who had recently become a fine director on *Snow White*. He liked my effort and with Perce Pearce, a story director, showed it to Walt. The result was my becoming an animator full time, my first assignment being on a short, *Ferdinand the Bull* (released November 25, 1938), directed by Ham Luske. I animated the young bulls butting and slamming each other around to show off and impress the men who staged the bull fights, then I did the scene where the full grown Ferdinand saunters overs and blithely sits down under a tree—on the stinger of an angry bee: He takes off bellowing with surprise and in pain.

Becattini: Later on you animated on *Pinocchio*, *Fantasia* and *Bambi*. Which sequences did you work on?

Bradbury: On *Pinocchio* (released February 7, 1940) I did some of the animation on Figaro, Geppetto's cat, again for director Ham Luske. I did enough footage to deserve screen credit (as John Bradbury). After finishing my work on *Pinocchio*, at the time when we



Cover to *Spunky Junior Cowboy* #7, Nov 1951. © Standard

Cover to *Four Color* #477, Jun 1953. Jack Bradbury pencils, Norm McGary (?) color art. © The Estate of Bob Clampett

were moving to the new, larger studio in Burbank, I was working again for Luske, animating Flying Horses, Centaurs and Centaurettes for Beethoven's *Pastoral* in the next feature, *Fantasia* (released November 13, 1940). I now had an assistant of my own, Wilbur Streech, a graduate of UCLA. After *Fantasia*, we began work on *Bambi* (released August 13, 1942). I did the fight sequence, wherein Bambi and Ronno battle over the doe, Faline.

Becattini: Why did you leave the Disney Studio in 1941?

Bradbury: The Disneys were in big financial trouble because of the huge debt incurred building a grand new studio. Also, the income from the animation features was not coming in as well as expected, as the war had ended Europe's lucrative market for US films, and the revenue from showing the films in all remaining markets was not enough to support a studio that size. Soon there were rumors of impending layoffs, and when they started laying off animation department people first, those Disney employees who had become Union members decided by vote to strike the Studio. I had gotten married in December of 1940, and in the early summer of 1941 found myself out on strike, with no income and our first child on the way. Five animators and their assistant from our unit, 1F, all went out, everyone but Eric Larson, the supervising animator of our group. The strike lasted two dreary months (from May 28 until July 28, 1941), and was finally settled by outside mediation. I received a telegram telling me to return to work. I had hardly had a chance to get started on my next assignment, *Wind in the Willows* (later released as part of *The Adventures of Ichabod and Mr. Toad* (1949)), when I got another notice that I had to leave. Art Babbitt, one of two top animators who had also gone out on strike (the other one being Bill Tytla), got his notice the same day and we walked out together.

Becattini: Then you went to work at the Warner Bros. animation studio?

Bradbury: Not immediately. A number of ex-Disney employees found work at MGM and Warner's, but several studio friends and I, somewhat weary and fed up with studio problems, were offered an opportunity to do something else, and we took it. America was at war, and the yards were turning out cargo ships as fast as they could. These were known as Liberty Ships, and our group was soon among the crews painting the darn things in the shipyards down in San Pedro. Quite a change from making animated cartoon movies, although we made almost as much money as we had at the Studio. I had hardly started working there when I received an animation job offer from MGM, but decided not to take it. However, about nine months later, when I got a second chance to go back to animation, this time to work with Friz Freleng at Warner's—which was then known as Schlesinger's—I left the shipyard and returned to studio work.

Becattini: Although you worked at Warner's for about two years, from 1942-44, you only got screen credit on three shorts, as far as I know…

Bradbury: They had a weird system there regarding screen credits. Warner's had four separate units, each with its

SUPERMOUSE
MAKE WAY FOR THE MOUSE OF MIGHT! HE'S BACK, COMPLETE WITH SUPERCHEESE —SO GET SET FOR FIREWORKS!
IS IT A DUCK?
IS IT A DODO?
NOW THAT'S SUPERMOUSE!
SUPERMOUSE! LOOK UP THERE! DO SOMETHING FOR THAT POOR LITTLE ELEPHANT!
I'M THE GREATEST LITTLE MOUSE IN TH' WORLD! I'M FAMOUS FROM THE CATSKILLS TO THE ROCKIES!
THINK OUGHTA GET THAT ELEPHANT DOWN!
HELP! SOMEBODY GET ME DOWN!
THE WORST NATIONAL BANK
FRANK NOT ANNABEL! I ALL WILL BE WELL!
GOSH!

Supermouse à la Bradbury, from *Coo Coo* #37, Jan 1948. © Standard

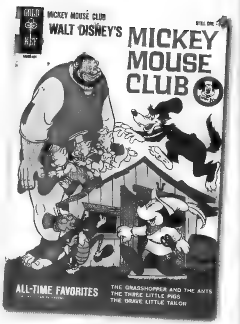
own director, story and layout men, background artist and six animators. When a unit completed a picture, only one animator received screen credit for that picture, though all six had worked on it. I don't recall why it was done this way, except perhaps six names might have cluttered up the opening title too much. As for my first screen credit at Warner's, here's an odd but true little tale. When I started working for Friz Freleng's unit, he put my name on his animators' screen credit list, and the first time my name came up it was put on a picture on which I'd not done even one drawing (*Jack-Wabbit and the Beanstalk*, a Bugs Bunny short released June 12, 1943. The other two Warner cartoons Bradbury got screen credit for were *Meatless Flyday*, released January 29, 1944, and *Stage Door Cartoon*, released December 30, 1944).

Becattini: What was it like to work at Warner's, compared to Disney's?

Bradbury: Friz was a great director to work for, and his group of artists (including story man Mike Maltese and animators Dick Bickenbach, Ken Champin, Gerry Chiniquy, Manuel Perez and Virgil Ross) were a fine bunch to work with.

Spencer Spook
HOLLOWE'EN'S OPPORTUNITY TIME TO START HAUNTING! WONDER WHY WE SPOOKS HAVE TO SPEND OUR WHOLE DEATHS SCARIN' PEOPLE AN' MAKIN' 'EM HATE US!
BOO-HOO-HOO! (SNIVEL)
JACK BRADBURY
ALWAYS TH' SAME OL' THING— WAKE PEOPLE UP BY MOANIN' OR RATTLIN' CHAINS, THEN SCARE 'EM HALF OUT OF THEIR WITS BY TAKIN' OFF OUR HEADS OR SOMETHIN'! BUT MOSTLY QUIETLY
CLANK! CLANK!
WE HAVE TO DO IT, I GUESS, BUT BY GOSH, I'M GONNA TRY TO MAKE UP A LITTLE POEM SHOULDN'T HAVE TO FEAR US SPOOKS— THEY SHOULD LIKE US!

Bradbury drew several stories starring this sympathetic ghost. From *Giggle* #49, Jan 1948. © ACG/Roger Broughton



Cover to *Mickey Mouse Club* #1, Jan 1964. Inked by Steve Steere. © Disney

Actually, I went through a difficult time at first getting on track, for I hadn't even lifted a pencil for well over a year. Besides, most of the animation I'd done for Disney had been four-legged, life-like animal action. Here at Warner's, all the animal characters, like Bugs Bunny, Sylvester the Cat, Porky Pig, etc., were humanized animal characters. We also worked on a cartoon series with a bungling GI character called Private SNAFU. These pictures were done for the Army and were supervised by Major Ted Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss.

Becattini: Were you still working at Warner's when you started drawing comic-book stories?

Bradbury: Yes. In 1943, one of the animators I knew in another unit, Gil Turner, introduced me to Jim Davis, a friend for whom he was doing some comic-book work in his spare time. These comic books consisted of animated animal characters, done very much like those we'd been doing at the studios. Ken Hultgren was also working for Davis at that time, at home. Jim represented Sangor Publications (a.k.a. Editorial Art Syndicate or Cinema Comics), a New York concern run by Ben W. Sangor and Richard Hughes which packaged comic-book titles for various publishers, including Creston (a.k.a. American Comics Group), Standard, and National/DC. Sangor and Hughes had their own artists in New York—mainly animators from the Paramount/Famous Studios like Dan Gordon—whereas Jim was in charge of the West Coast branch, buying stories and artwork done by Hollywood animation artists and writers. This comic book thing looked pretty good to me, so I thought I'd give it a try. Jim told me to go ahead, rough up a story and let him see it. I did a little twist on the old Tortoise and Hare tale and he okayed it for me to draw up and ink.

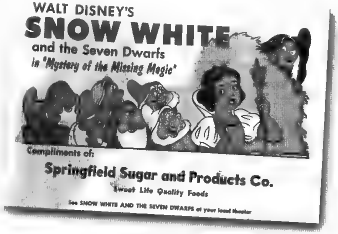
Becattini: So you left Warner's to do comic book work full time…

Bradbury: Well, yes and no. I had just started drawing comics for Jim when he offered me quite a bit more money to leave Warner's and work for Carry-Weston, the small animation studio he was in charge of. Anyone not in the service during wartime, but receiving a deferment doing war-work, could not change jobs without first appearing before a Draft

Board. A friend, Ray Patin, who was at that time President of the Screen Cartoonists Guild and also worked at Warner's, decided to leave and go with Jim also. We appeared before the Board together, accompanied by our Guild business agent, who explained for us the reason for our making a change, and the board okayed our move. Ray and I then began our work for Davis' outfit, both animating on their defense film (*The Inside Story of Seaman Joe*), and doing comics on the side. We later did a Parts Manual for the Lockheed P-80 fighter jet, which was also considered deferrable war-work. My brother Ed, an engineer at Lockheed at that time, was paid well to supervise our bumbling efforts several evenings a week and somehow we got through the stuff. After the Lockheed Manual was finally completed, Jim somehow managed to find us an animated cartoon picture to do for Cathedral Films, a religious film company. The War over and our Cathedral film now done, most of us were now planning to work at home on comic books full time. No one intended going back to the studios. Several months passed by with each of us working at home, then Jim, Al Hubbard, (former Disney and Warner story man) Hubie Karp and I decided to share an office together. First it was a Real Estate office in Glendale, where I lived, then we moved to larger accommodations in Montrose, a nearby town. From Montrose we moved again, this time into an office in downtown Glendale. Owen Fitzgerald, a layout artist, was there for a while, too. Ken Hultgren still worked at home, but he and writer Homer Brightman came around nearly every day to lunch with us.

Becattini: Were you all working for the same comic-book titles?

Bradbury: Yes. We were doing strips for such titles as *Ha Ha*, *Giggle*, *Coo Coo* and *Happy*, published by the American Comics Group, in which both Sangor and Hughes had an interest, and by Standard, who bought the stories from Sangor. Hughes, who served as editor in New York, would send in his comments every week or two, but it was up to Jim Davis entirely whether stories were acceptable or not, and he always seemed pleased


WALT DISNEY'S
SNOW WHITE
and the Seven Dwarfs
in 'Mystery of the Missing Magic'
Compliments of:
Springfield Sugar and Products Co.
Sweet Life Quality Foods
See SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS at your local theater

BUNGLE of the JUNGLE
I BETTER GO BACK OH SAY SHH! GUNGA! NO TELLIN' WHAT HE MIGHT BE UP TO SINCE HE CAME TO DA JUNGLE WIT' HIS CIVILIZED IDEAS, I'VE HAD NUTTIN' BUT TROUBLE!
WUAT DA F
SNAP!
ZOOM!
BOP!

Bradbury drew this Tarzan spoof for *Giggle* in 1951. © ACG/Roger Broughton

with my work. Some of my own characters were Footsy Hare (which was my first comic-book strip for Davis), Tuffy the Cat, Bagshaw Bear, Humphrey Hummingbird, Butch McSparrow, Stanley and Homer (a horse and a dog), Li'l Thomas Hippopot, Rufus and Goofus (two Dachshund dogs), Pansy the Chimp, Fremont Frog, Hucky Duck (a Huckleberry Finn type character), Gooligan (a tough dog), "Doc" E. Z. Duzit (a little gnome-like doctor who treated the forest animals), Clem McHedgehog, Boar Brummel and probably a few others I cannot remember.

Becattini: Did you do the drawing as well as the writing?

Bradbury: I wrote, pencilled and inked most of them. I didn't do the lettering, though, which was done by Mel "Tubby" Millar, a former story and sketch man at Disney's and Warner's. I also did quite a few strips that I did not write—like Snoozer, Billy Bull, or Spencer Spook, which was written by Hubie Karp and by Hughes, I think. Occasionally Hughes would request a special idea be developed, like The Hepcats, written by gifted Cal Howard and drawn by me. Then, sometime in 1948, the bottom fell out of the independent

Cover to a 1958 Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs giveaway. © Disney

PLUTO
AIRSHIP SUPPLIES
OCEAN POOCH! YOU'RE IN THE WAY!
WHIRR-R-R R-R-ROARR-R-R
LAN' SAKES! LOOK THE POOR POOR!
LIE STILL, PLUTO, AND I'LL FIX YOU EIGHT UP!
WHIR-R-R WHIR-R-R-R

Bradbury was by far the best Pluto artist in comic books. From *Four Color* #429, Oct 1952. © Disney

comic book business, and our work for Sangor came to a rather abrupt end. Jim Davis had been doing the *Fox and Crow* comic himself for about three years (for DC/National Comics), and still had that to do, but the rest of us were now basically out of work. Luckily, Lynn Karp (Hubie's brother, and a former Disney animator) and I were told that Standard Publications wanted us to do some work for them. For the next couple years (1949-51) I wrote and drew seven issues of a series called *Spunky—Junior Cowboy and His Talking Horse Stanley*. I enjoyed very much doing these, for again I was free to write and draw whatever and whoever I liked.

Becattini: Then you went to work for Western Publishing?

Bradbury: Well, I'd first gotten in touch with Western in about 1947, when the animated comics with Jim Davis were already slowing down. Western, which published (under the Dell imprint) Disney comic books as well as several other titles featuring licensed characters from animation, movies and TV, had offices out in the Beverly Hills business district, and Tom McKimson, whom I'd known as animator at Warner's, was art director there. I heard that work was available for me if I wanted it. Yet the thought of doing work for Western was not too enticing, as I would no longer have the freedom I'd had when working for Sangor. It meant using stories from their story men, plus drawing an eight-panel page (for Sangor we had only six panels per page), and having to bear down and draw all Disney characters. Not to mention the pay, as they offered about $18 per page, drawing and inking—a far cry from the $25 per page we had been getting at Sangor's. So I mulled it over very carefully for a bit, then decided to take a fling at magazine cartoons first, something I'd always wanted to try. A number of Disney men had gone into magazine work and done very well at it—Virgil "Vip" Partch, Don Tobin, Claude Smith, Dick Shaw and Roy Williams, to name a few. There was a large market for magazine cartoons at that time and so once again I worked for a while at home, writing gags and doing up rough sketches to mail to the magazines. As these were returned and continually sent to other magazines that rejected them in turn, I began to realize selling cartoons was not that easy. My drawing was probably too Disney-ish, not distinctive enough. The successful magazine cartoonists had each been able to develop an individual style, far different and away from the Disney influence. I, unfortunately, had not.

Becattini: So you eventually decided to go with Western…

Bradbury: Right. After keeping at it (magazine cartoons) diligently for several months, I decided I'd fooled around long enough. I had five mouths to feed—we now had three sons—and I needed to start making some money again. I called Tom McKimson and made an appointment to see him. Tom was very cordial and I came away with a ten-page Donald Duck story to pencil (published in *Walt Disney's Comics* #113, Feb 1950). They also furnished their artists with all the fine Strathmore paper needed. From a slow start, I gradually worked into their way of doing things. Pencil it in, take it over for an okay, then ink the thing, deliver it and pick up the next story to work on. At first it was taking me twice as long to do the work, with all this driving back and forth, but slowly I picked up speed.

Becattini: Were you still working in the Glendale office at that time?

Bradbury: Yes, I was. But after I felt I was pretty well set at Western, I packed up my family and two dogs and left town. We moved south about 60 or 70 miles, to the lovely coastal beach town of Balboa, in the Newport Beach area. That was in

Cover to *A Big Golden Book* #472, 1951. Jack Bradbury pencils, Campbell Grant color art. © Warner Bros.

1951, and we would live there for the next 17 years.

Becattini: I suppose you were assigned to draw the Disney characters because you had been a Disney animator, right?

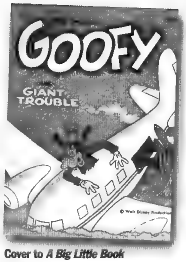
Bradbury: Yes. I was already quite familiar with most of the Disney characters, having done so many of them in my early days as an in-betweener. I also did a few stories with the Warner characters for a while—Bugs Bunny, Porky Pig, Elmer Fudd. Later on (1959-66) they had me draw quite a few stories starring the Walter Lantz characters—Andy Panda, Oswald the Rabbit. Yet from the early 1950s onwards I worked mostly on the Disney gang—Donald Duck, Donald's Nephews, Mickey and Minnie, Goofy, Pluto, The Seven Dwarfs, The Li'l Bad Wolf. You name it, I worked on it. I also did some stories starring Uncle Scrooge, that wonderful brainchild of the gifted Carl Barks, whom I'd see occasionally out at the Western offices. You know what, I never liked that much drawing the Disney Ducks, whereas I enjoyed other characters like Mickey and Goofy. I never thought I was that good as a duck man.

Becattini: Well, I think your Ducks were great!

WALT DISNEY'S
DONALD DUCK
AW... I MISSED AGAIN!
GET THE BRASS RING AND WIN A FREE RIDE
THOSE KIDS HAVE BEEN ON THAT MERRY-GO-ROUND FIVE TIMES, AND STILL THEY CAN'T GET THE BRASS RING!
WHEN I WAS A KID, I GOT THE BRASS RING EVERY TIME!
I'LL HAVE TO SHOW THEM HOW IT'S DONE!
WAIT AND SEE, UNCA DONALD... IT'S NOT AS EASY AS IT LOOKS!
TUT! TUT!
IT'S ALL A MATTER OF KNOWING...
HOW...

Early Donald Duck page by Bradbury, from *Donald Duck* #27, Jan/Feb 1953. © Disney

Bradbury: Thanks, but that won't make me change my mind. My own sons told me they preferred Barks' Ducks to mine, and I certainly couldn't blame them for that!



Cover to *A Big Little Book* #2021, 1968. © Disney

Becattini: You also drew several issues of *Beany and Cecil*...

Bradbury: Sure. Beany and Cecil, the Seasick Serpent. I enjoyed doing quite a series of comics and coloring books starring them. I had known Bob Clampett at Warner's, where he had directed cartoon shorts. He was the creator and owner of the popular TV show, *Time for Beany*.

Becattini: Of course all of these you drew anonymously, as that was the policy at Western...

Bradbury: Yeah, of course I wasn't able to sign any of the stories I drew for the comics, but they gave me a credit line on the children's books and coloring books I drew, mostly with the Disney characters, but a few Bugs Bunnys too. When the illustrations were done in wash, I would be pencilling only, the color art being provided by someone else (Campbell Grant or Gene Wolfe). I drew and inked several large Disneyland coloring books, with ideas taken directly from the world-famous theme park itself.

Becattini: Have you ever tried doing a syndicated strip?

Bradbury: I have, but to no avail. In 1939, when I was still working at Disney's, Hank Porter—who was head of the Publicity Art Department—and I did a speculative comic strip for Edgar Bergen, the famous ventriloquist. I did the drawing from photos Bergen had given me and Hank followed right behind inking them. We did two weeks of dailies in three days and delivered them to Bergen's office; then we waited weeks while Bergen and the syndicate haggled over satisfactory financial terms. But unable to come to an agreement, the strip died a-borning. Shortly after, it did appear as *Mortimer and Charlie*, drawn this time by Chase Craig and Carl Buettner, both of whom later worked at Western. It didn't last long in the paper we took, the *Los Angeles Times* nor, we heard, in the rest of the country. Hank and I had considered our work on the strip purely speculative, but when the problem between Bergen and the syndicate proved unsolvable we received apologies for the interminable delay and $200 for our work. Later on, in the 1950s, I was asked by Western to draw two syndicated strips on speculation—*Beany and Cecil* and *Bozo the Clown*. Unfortunately, neither one was sold.

Walt Disney's
MICKEY and GOOFY
HI GOOFY!
HULLO MICKEY! I WAS HOPIN' YUMP OVER AROUND!
I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU MIGHT LIKE TO TAKE A LITTLE SPIN WITH ME OUT IN THUM COUNTRY AND GET SOME FRESH AIR!
DON'T MIND IF I DO!
I JUST OVER-HAULED MUH CAR AND IT KINDA WANTED TUH TRY IT OUT!
SPEAK!
I HOPE YOU FIXED THAT LEAKY RADIATOR!
YUP!
OH, OH! I THOUGHT I SAID YOU FIXED IT!
I DID!
I HANG A BUCKET UNDER THUH LEAK!
ALL I HAVE TUH DO IS DUMP OUT AND EMPTY IT BACK IN!

Great Mickey and Goofy gag page from *Mickey Mouse* #46, Feb/Mar 1956. © Disney

Becattini: Did you write any of the stories you drew for Western?

Bradbury: Not for many years. As I said before, they had their own story men at Western, talented people like Del Connell or Carl Fallberg, who did their scripts in storyboard form, as they had previously worked in animation themselves, just like the guys who wrote stories for Jim Davis. Yet I did write some of the stories I drew for Western and for the Disney Studio later on. Indeed, most of the stories I did from 1963 onwards were never published in the USA, as they were produced for the overseas market.

Becattini: *Hundreds* of them were published in Italy and in most other European countries, as well as in South America. Were these done for the Disney Studio?

Bradbury: For a few years, I drew them for Western, then directly for Tom Golberg at the Disney Studio, from about 1967 until 1978. I did the Ducks, Mickey Mouse and Goofy, Gyro Gearloose, Chip 'n' Dale, and The Li'l Bad Wolf, among others. I usually pencilled these, the inking being done by Studio artists (Jim Fletcher or Steve Steere). Late in 1973 or early in 1974, I went back to doing stories for Western, too. Phil DeLara, the resident artist on Chip 'n' Dale, had died, and they asked me to take over the strip, which appeared monthly in *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*, which I did, pencilling only, for a couple years. Then, for a short while, due to my deteriorating eyesight, I quit drawing and did story writing only, but not with any great success. But it didn't matter, I was about ready to quit working anyway, and in 1978, at age 64, I retired—although occasionally I'd still do some work for Western on the larger coloring books.

Becattini: Actually, you wrote one more story in 1987, which was drawn by Dave Bennett…

Bradbury: Oh, sure. That was a *Spencer Spook* story that Ron Frantz published in a reprint series he did. It was fun working with Dave, my friend and foremost fan, who is a fine cartoonist/layout man/animator and director in southern California. Dave has collected over 5,900 pages of my comic book work. That's a frightening amount of stuff and today it fatigues me just to think of it. However, if Dave says I've done that much, I must believe him, for he has it all in his collection at home. By the way, Dave did a beautiful drawing of Mary Jim and me when we got married in 1984. I'd known Mary Jim for many years, as she had been married to Bob Karp (Lynn's and Hubie's brother), who wrote Donald Duck and other Disney syndicated newspaper strips for 37 years until his death in 1975. Mary Jim and I lived in Santa Rosa until recently, when we decided to move south to join her son's family. With us both well into our 88th year, it won't be too long before we need a little help.

Becattini: Looking back at your great career in animation and comics, what would you like to say?

Bradbury: I can only say that I am grateful for having spent those early years in the old Hyperion Avenue Disney Studio—it was a blast! I am not sorry I left animation and got into comics, for my first love, before going to Disney, was comic strips. The syndicated newspaper kind, of course, but comic books were pretty close. And comic books were good to me, enabling me to support my family comfortably and allowing me to work on my own time and live where I wished.

To have worked in the early days of both animation and comics has been a privilege and a pleasure for me. In both cases, I feel I was awfully lucky to have been there and at that time. So, I rest my case, and put down my drawing pencil for good. Like Ferdinand the Bull, I'd like to just sit now, and smell the flowers.

A young Jack Bradbury at his animation desk, working on Disney's *Pinocchio* (c.1939). © Disney

Jack Bradbury
Comic Checklist

by Alberto Becattini, Dave Bennett and Steven Rowe (with thanks to Jerry Bails' *Who's Who of American Comic Books*, to the Grand Comics Database, and to the Disney Database/ I.N.D.U.C.K.S. Thanks also to long time Bradbury fans Klaus Strzyz and Klaus Spillmann.)

A) Original Comic Book Editions

The Adventures of Spencer Spook (ACE, 1987) Spencer Spook #4 (script only, art: Dave Bennett)

America's Best Comics (Standard, 1947) Jasper #23.

Andy Panda (Dell, 1959) Andy Panda and Charlie Chicken #46, 48.

Barnyard Comics (Standard, 1944-50) Tuffy #3; Stanley (and Homer) #5, 8, 12 (?), 13 (?), 19, 20; Pansy the Chimp #9; Doremus Dormouse #9, 16; Little Red Henrietta #10; Boxy #12; Mickey Pigg #12; Lucky Foot Bunnigan #13; Hucky Duck #15, 17, 23; Chappy Chipmunk #19, 20; Boar Brummel #20; Lil Thomas Hippopot/Clem McHedgehog #21; Robin Hood Robin #22; Snoozer #26-28; Prof. Bacon #26, 27; Percy Pig #28, 29; Dizzy Duck #28-31; Billy Bull #29, 31.

Brer Rabbit in "A Kite Tail" (Western/Southern California Edison giveaway, 1956) Art (16 pp.)

Chip 'n' Dale (Dell, 1956-62) Chip 'n' Dale #6-9, 12, 16, 21-25, 29, 30; The Three Little Pigs #6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23-27, 29, 30.

Chip 'n' Dale (Gold Key, 1976) Chip 'n' Dale # 40 (pencils only).

Christmas Parade (Dell, 1952-57) Pluto #4, 6, 7; Donald Duck #5; The Li'l Bad Wolf #6, 7; Chip 'n' Dale #6-8; Minnie Mouse #6; Mickey Mouse/Jiminy Cricket/Minnie and Clarabelle #8.

Christmas Parade (Gold Key, 1963) The Li'l Bad Wolf #1; Brer Rabbit #1

Cinderella in "Fairest of the Fair" (Western/American Dairy Association Giveaway, 1955) Cover/Story (14 pp.).

Comic Cavalcade (DC/National, 1951) Flippity and Floppity #47.

Coo Coo Comics (Standard, 1944-51) Bagshaw Bear #17, 37; Tuffy #18, 19, 22, 24, 28, 31-33, 36, 38-40, 43; Roofus and Goofus #20; Spunky #22, 43, 44, 49; "Butch" O'Sparrow #25; Perkins Pooch #28; Hucky Duck #32, 34, 35; Bruno Bear #35; Supermouse #36, 37, 42; Dodger de Squoil #36, 39; Douglas and Duncan #38-43; Fisty #47, 48; Butch and Buttercup #48, 49, 56; Cuffy #52.

"Cookie" (ACG, 1949-51) Gyp and Flip #27, 30, 31; Pop Knows #28, 32; Lover Boy #33; The Teensters #34.

Dell Giant Comics (Dell, 1960-61) Pluto #26, 33; The Big Bad Wolf #30; Gyro Gearloose #33, 39, 49; Goofy #33; Huey, Dewey and Louie and Grandma Duck #35; Donald Duck and Daisy #38; Mickey Mouse/Minnie and Clarabelle #39; The Li'l Bad Wolf/Goofy and Gyro Gearloose/The Seven Dwarfs and Mickey Mouse/Brer Rabbit and Chip 'n' Dale/Daisy and Minnie with Donald #47; Donald's Nephews and Daisy's Nieces #47, 53; Grandma Duck #49, 55; Uncle Donald and His Nephews Dude Ranch #52; Gladstone Gander #52; Donald and His Nephews #52 (inks: Steve Steere); Gladstone and the Witch #53.

Disneyland Birthday Party (Dell, 1958) Peter Pan and Captain Hook #1.

Dizzy Dames (ACG, 1952) Man-Huntin' Minnie of Delta Pu #1, 2.

Dizzy Duck (Standard, 1950-51) Dizzy #32, 33; Billy #32; Percy #33; Lucky Duck #37.

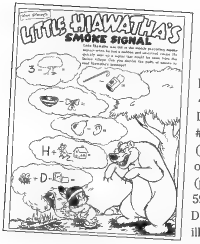
Donald Duck (Dell/Gold Key, 1952-66) Donald Duck #27-32, 37, 50, 52, 55, 61, 76-78, 80, 83-85, 88-90; Goofy #47, 48, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60, 61, 64, 67, 69, 73-75, 88-91, 94, 95, 100, 105, 107, 109; Text Illustration #76; Goofy and Gilbert #80.

Donald Duck Album (Gold Key, 1963) Donald Duck Album/Daisy Duck/Scrooge McDuck/Ludwig Von Drake/Donald Duck #1.

Donald Duck Beach Party (Dell, 1954-58) Donald Duck/Introductory pages and panels #1; Uncle Scrooge #1, 2; Minnie Mouse #2; Minnie and Clarabelle #3; Mickey Mouse and Goofy #3, 5; Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs/Chip 'n' Dale/Morty, Ferdie and Pluto #5.

Donald Duck Fun Book (Dell, 1953) Cover #1 (pencils only).

Fighting Yank (Standard, 1947) Chappy Chipmunk #19.



Four Color Comics (Dell, 1950-62) Mickey Mouse #261, 819; Porky Pig #295, 311; Beany (and Cecil) #368, 414, 448, 477, 530, 570, 635; Donald Duck #394; Covers #368, 414, 429, 448, 477 (penciis only), 530 (pencils only), 570 (pencils only), 635 (pencils only); Pluto #429, 595, 654, 853, 941, 1039, 1143; Duck Album illustrations/Scrooge McDuck #492; Goofy #627, 802, 899, 1094; Jiminy Cricket #701; Daisy Duck's Diary #743, 858; Little Hiawatha #901; Donald Duck Album #1182, 1239; The Li'l Bad Wolf #1204; Gyro Gearloose #1267.

Funnybone (ACG, 1944) Aunt Polly Hog #1.

Giggle Comics (ACG, 1944-53) Footsy Hare #6, 31, 32; Hard-Boiled Haggarty #30; Fremont Frog #33, 34, 51-54, 58, 61, 64, 67; Timothy Turtle #43; Spencer Spook #43-46, 49, 53-59, 62, 65, 66; Inside Dope (Real Lowdown) #56, 58, 70; Pop Knows #76; Finnegan #77; Bungle of the Jungle #78, 81; Witch Hazel #82.

Goofy Comics (Standard, 1944-53) Stanley Stallion #6; Bagshaw Bear #11, 14, 15, 17-19, 21-25; Hucky Duck #17; Gooligan #19, 20; Lil Thomas Hippopot #27; Doremus Dormouse #28; Hubert #28, 29; Boar Brummel #30; Wilbur Fox #32; Lucky Duck #48.

Gyro Gearloose (Dell, 1962) Gyro Gearloose #01-329-207.

Ha Ha Comics (ACG, 1947-51) Waldo Wolf #25; "Doc" E. Z. Duzit #33, 60, 65, 71; Humphrey Hummingbird #30, 39-41; Impulsive Imps #43; Bimbah #45; Blitzen, Jr. #49; Shilly and Shally #51; Doc #52; The Hepcats/Square #57, 59-65, 67, 69; Real Lowdown #62; Hooty and Tooty #77; Rip Rooster #77-79; Squirrelly #81.

Happy Birthday Mickey (Disney/May Co., 1978) Comic contest entry folder and card issued on Mickey Mouse's 50th Anniversary. Includes 1 comic page (14 panels) by Bradbury (inks: Larry Mayer?), featuring several Disney characters.

Happy Comics (Standard, 1944-48) Stanley #6, 9, 12-18, 24, 26; Stanley and Homer #19-22; Pansy the Chimp #18, 19-22, 28; Climbin' Simon #19; Clem McHedgehog #21; Li'l Thomas Hippopot #24; Little Smacko/Bruno Bear #25; Dudley #26.

Happy Rabbit (Standard, 1951-52) Percy Pig #41; Munchy the Squirrel #44, 47.

Hi-Jinx (ACG, 1947-48) The Hepcats #1-7.

The Kilroys (ACG, 1949-53) Pop Knows #20 (?), 22, 40; Scat #36.

Laffy-Daffy Comics (Rural Home, 1945) (Strip title?).

Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies (Dell, 1950) Elmer Fudd #109.

March of Comics (KK/Western Giveaway, 1950) Mickey Mouse #60.

Merry-Go-Round Comics (ACG, 1944) (Strip title?).

Mickey Mouse (Dell/Gold Key, 1953-64) Mickey Mouse #33-38, 41-45, 50-52, 55-57, 60-62, 64, 65, 70, 72, 75, 76, 85, 86, 88, 89, 94, 95, 97, 99; Mickey and Goofy #35, 36, 38, 44, 46, 47, 57; Mickey and Pluto #45; Pluto #47; Chip 'n' Dale #47; Donald Duck #48; The Li'l Bad Wolf #52-55, 57-62, 64-68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 81, 83, 85, 86, 88, 89, 92, 94, 96; Goofy #64; Pluto #79; Cover #89; Mickey Mouse Comic Album #95; Three Little Pigs #95.

Mickey Mouse Almanac (Dell, 1957) Mickey Mouse/Goofy/Grandma Duck/Chip 'n' Dale/Daisy Duck/Huey, Dewey and Louie/Pluto/Little Hiawatha/The Li'l Bad Wolf #1.

Mickey Mouse Club (Gold Key, 1964) Cover/Introductory page #1 (inks: Steve Steere).

Mickey Mouse in Frontierland (Dell, 1956) Pluto #1.

Mickey Mouse Summer Fun (Dell, 1958) Mickey Mouse/Chip 'n' Dale/Pluto/Mickey Mouse and Goofy #1.

A New Adventure of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (Western/Bendix Washing Machines Giveaway, 1952) Cover/Story (32 pp., half-size).

New Funnies/TV Funnies (Dell, 1959-62) Andy Panda (and Charlie Chicken) #265, 267, 268, 270, 271, 272, 275, 276, 282, 287, 288; Oswald the Rabbit #265-268, 271, 272, 275, 276, 282, 284, 287, 288; Charlie Chicken #287.

Peter Pan Treasure Chest (Dell, 1953) Mickey Mouse and Peter Pan/Nursemaid Nana/John and Michael #1.

Picnic Party (Dell, 1955-56) Mickey Mouse/Pluto #6, 7; Chip 'n' Dale/The Li'l Bad Wolf/Grandma Duck/Minnie Mouse and Clarabelle #7.

Real Screen Comics (National/DC, 1949-50) Flippity and Flop #23, 26, 27; Fox and Crow #25.

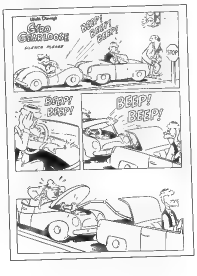
Santa's Christmas Comics (Standard, 1952, one-shot) Spunky and Stanley.

Scamp (Dell, 1959-60) Bongo and Lumpjaw #12, 15.

Silly Symphonies (Dell/Western, 1952-59) Chicken Little/Lady #1; The Golden Touch #2; The Country Cousin/Toby Tortoise #4; Mickey Mouse/Pluto and Peter Pan #6; Peter and the Wolf #7; Paul Bunyan #9.

Sniffy the Pup (Standard, 1950) Dizzy Duck #10.

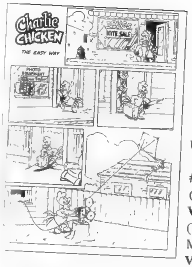
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs in "Mystery of the Missing Magic" (Western Giveaway, 1958) Cover/Story/Back Cover (16 pp., half-size).



Spunky Junior Cowboy (Standard, 1949-51) Spunky/Stanley #1-7; Pepito #4-7; Covers #1-7.

Summer Fun (Dell, 1959) Mickey Mouse/Pluto/Goofy #2.

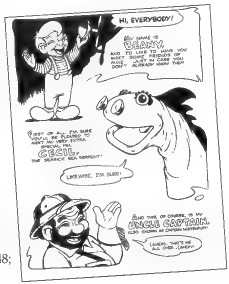
Supermouse (Standard,



1948-51) Supermouse/Li'l Thomas Hippopot #1; Butch and Buttercup #5, 9, 12.
Tom and Jerry (Dell, 1965-66) Spike and Tyke #187; Professor Putter #222, 225, 227-230 (pencils only).
Uncle Scrooge (Dell, 1961/66) Text Illustration #33; Gyro Gearloose #65 (inks: Steve Steere).
Vacation in Disneyland (Dell, 1958) Fantasyland: Mickey Mouse and Goofy #1.
Vacation Parade (Dell, 1952-53) The Seven Dwarfs/Minnie Mouse #3; Donald Duck #4.
Walt Disney's Comics and Stories (Dell/Gold Key, 1950-66/1974-76) Text Illustrations #112, 113, 138, 246; Donald Duck #113, 268; Pluto #146, 157, 172-182, 185-187, 190, 199, 202, 203; The Li'l Bad Wolf #157, 167, 175, 177, 179, 181-190, 198, 202, 248, 254, 259-262, 264, 267, 268, 272-274, 276, 277, 279, 288; Chip 'n' Dale #204-207, 209-212, 215, 216, 219-222, 225, 228, 231, 232, 234-236, 239, 240, 245, 255-263, 404-428 (pencils only), 430 (pencils only); Gyro Gearloose #249, 257, 260, 262, 264, 265, 269-274, 312; Scamp #254; Mickey Mouse #268, 288; Ludwig Von Drake #270, 273; Cover #275 (part); Goofy #296.
Woody Woodpecker (Dell/Gold Key, 1961-66) Oswald the Rabbit #67, 70-72, 80; Andy Panda and Charlie Chicken #75; Chilly Willy #83-85, 88, 93.

Additional comic-book strips Bradbury is known to have drawn for hitherto unknown titles published by:
ACG – Northern Nonsense (1947); Sly (1951).
Standard – The Joneses (1945-48); Bucky the Burro (1949-50).

B) Comic Book Reprints
Ace Comics Present (ACE, 1987) "Butch"
O'Sparrow/Bagshaw Bear/Tuffy/Supermouse #2.
Adventures of Spencer Spook (ACE, 1986-87) Spencer Spook #2, 4.
Atomic Rabbit (ACG, undated but 1997?) Bungle of the Jungle #1.
Chip 'n' Dale (Gold Key/Whitman, 1968-84) Chip 'n' Dale #4-6, 8-11, 15-17, 19-26, 28, 29, 31, 36, 42, 43, 48, 50, 51, 55, 57, 66, 83; Three Little Pigs #8, 10, 11, 18, 19, 42, 66.
Christmas Parade (Gold Key, 1970) Pluto #7.
Christmas Parade (Golden Press, 1977) Gladstone and the Witch #11191.
Christmas Parade (Gladstone, 1988/89) Goofy/The Li'l Bad Wolf/Minnie and Clarabelle/Jiminy Cricket/Mickey Mouse #1; Chip 'n' Dale #1, 2; Pluto/The Seven Dwarfs #2.
Disneyland Birthday Party (Gladstone, 1985) Peter Pan and Captain Hook #1.
Dizzy Dames (ACG, 1997) Man-Huntin' Minnie of Delta Pu #1.
Donald and Mickey (Disney, 1994) Mickey Mouse #22.
Donald and Mickey (Gladstone, 1995) Mickey and Goofy #30.
Donald Duck (Gold Key/Whitman, 1975-79) Donald Duck #164, 168, 174, 180, 189, 191, 197, 213.
Donald Duck (Gladstone, 1987-89/94-97) Chip 'n' Dale #260, 299, 304; Daisy Duck #273; Donald Duck #285.
Donald Duck Adventures (Gladstone, 1994-97) Donald Duck #27, 44; Chip 'n' Dale #41.
Donald Duck Comic Digest (Gladstone, 1987) Chip 'n' Dale #1-5; Donald Duck #2.
Fox and Crow (National/DC, 1963) Flippity and Flop #82.
Giggle Comics (ACG, 1953) Doc Kwak #90.
Ha Ha Comics (ACG, 1950) Aunt Polly Hog #73.
The Kilroys (ACG, 2002) The Hepcats #1.
Mickey and Donald (Gladstone, 1988-89) Mickey Mouse #2, 11, 13, 14; Mickey and Pluto/Mickey and Goofy #12.
Mickey Mouse (Gold Key/Western, 1976-81) Mickey Mouse #161, 163, 171, 172, 173, 176, 178, 181, 189, 192-194, 197, 201, 206, 207, 211, 212; Cover #173; The Li'l Bad Wolf #176, 206; Goofy #179; Minnie and Clarabelle #189; Mickey and Goofy #195.
Mickey Mouse (Gladstone, 1989) Mickey Mouse #250.
Mickey Mouse Adventures (Disney, 1990-91) Mickey Mouse #1; Mickey and Minnie #13.
Mickey Mouse Comic Digest (Gladstone, 1987) Pluto #1, 2; Mickey Mouse #1-4; Goofy #2, 4.
Scamp (Gold Key, 1976) Bongo and Lumpjaw #32.
Supermouse (Standard, 1956) Dizzy Duck #35.
Uncle Scrooge (Gladstone, 1994) Donald Duck #287, 288.
Uncle Scrooge Adventures (Gladstone, 1996-97) Gyro Gearloose #36; Duck Album #39; Donald Duck #41, 42; Daisy Duck #42.
Uncle Scrooge Comic Digest (Gladstone, 1987) Gyro Gearloose #2.
Vacation in Disneyland (Gold Key, 1965) The Big Bad Wolf #1.
Walt Disney Comics Digest (Gold Key, 1969-76) Chip 'n' Dale #12, 27, 39, 46, 57; Fantasyland: Mickey and Goofy #14; Jiminy Cricket/Peter Pan and Captain Hook #26; The Seven Dwarfs #27; The Seven Dwarfs and Mickey Mouse #30; Pluto #38, 57; Grandma Duck #41, 57; Minnie and Clarabelle/Brer Rabbit #48; The Big Bad Wolf #53;


HI, EVERYBODY!
MY NAME IS GIANNA GRIFFINI. AND I'D LIKE TO HAVE YOU AS SOME FRIENDS OF MINE TO COME AND VISIT OUR ALBUM SOME TIME!
BUT OF ALL THE DARE YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING IN THIS ALBUM, I'D SAY THE SCARIEST WAS MARRIAGE!
GEORGE THE SCARIEST WAS MARRIAGE!
LATER, WISE, I'M SURE!
AND THAT, OF COURSE, IS MY UNCLE GRIFFINI.
HMPH! THAT'S ME, ALL RIGHT. LAUGHING!

Beany and CECIL
by Bob Bumpst
BEANY! BEANY!
BOINK! ZBOINK! WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTHING'S WRONG, BEANY BOY! I'VE JUST TOLD SOMEONE TO JUMP OFF A CLIFF!
SAY! THIS IS MADE OF PUFFY GREEN "STUFF"! AND IT'S SOFT!
AND IT DON'T HAVE A SCRATCH ON IT! AND A GOOD GRIP, TOO!
RUN-ERR!
OH, BOY! SHE'S AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BEANY JET, TOO!
YES, YOU'RE A GENIUS!
WHAT'S YOUR PLAN, BEANY BOY?
BOINK! I DUNNO— HA HA! JUST KIDS!
BOINK!
BEANY AND CECIL IN THE BEANY JET

Uncle Scrooge/Minnie Mouse #54; Huey, Dewey and Louie #55, 57; Mickey Mouse/Goofy/Daisy Duck/Little Hiawatha/The Li'l Bad Wolf #57.

Walt Disney's Autumn Adventures (Disney, 1991) Pluto #2.

Walt Disney's Comics and Stories (Gold Key/Whitman, 1965-81) Chip 'n' Dale #298, 474; Pluto #398; The Li'l Bad Wolf #401, 486; Mickey Mouse #406, 407; Gyro Gearloose #476, 487.

Walt Disney's Comics and Stories (Gladstone, 1987-90) Three Little Pigs #515; Chip 'n' Dale #519, 536, 538, 540, 546; The Li'l Bad Wolf #525, 534, 537, 542, 544; Grandma Duck #539; Goofy #541; Huey, Dewey and Louie #542; Mickey Mouse #542; Pluto #543, 544.

Walt Disney's Comics and Stories (Disney, 1990-93) Chip 'n' Dale #550; The Li'l Bad Wolf #575, 582.

Walt Disney's Comics and Stories (Gladstone, 1996-98) Chip 'n' Dale #605, 611, 613, 620; Mickey and Goofy #613; Mickey Mouse #617; The Li'l Bad Wolf #621; The Country Cousin #623.

Walt Disney's Comics Digest (Gladstone, 1987) Mickey Mouse and Peter Pan #4; Donald Duck/Mickey Mouse #5; The Country Cousin #6.

Walt Disney Showcase (Gold Key/Western, 1972-79) Pluto #7, 13, 20, 23, 33, 51.

Walt Disney's Summer Fun (Disney, 1991) Donald Duck #1.

C) Disney Overseas Production

Note: Following is a list of the characters Bradbury drew for the "Disney Studio Overseas Program," none of which were published in the USA. Bradbury pencilled and inked several stories from 1963-69, the others being inked by Ellis Eringer or Steve Steere. Steere inked all stories from 1970-78. Along with the character's name, years of production are given, along with the codes of first and last story.

Bambi 1975 (S 75173).

The Beagle Boys 1966 (S 66164).

The Big Bad Wolf 1968 (S 68170) / 1972 / 1976 / 1977 (S 77021).

Chip 'n' Dale 1967 (S 67117) / 1968 / 1971 / 1973-77 (S 77050).

Donald Duck 1963 (S 63051) / 1965-68 / 1970 / 1973 (S 73184).

Goofy 1964 (S 64082) – 1974 (S 74125).

Grandma Duck 1966 (S 66001) – 1968 (S 68167).

Gyro Gearloose 1964 (S 64023) – 1967 (S 67055).

Huey, Dewey and Louie 1966 (S 66075) – 1968 (S 68171).

The Li'l Bad Wolf 1963 (S 63008) / 1968 / 1971 / 1972 (S 72467).

Ludwig Von Drake 1963 (S 63096).

Mad Madam Mim 1966 (S 66144) – 1967 (S 67037).

Mickey and Goofy 1963 (S 63091) – 1966 / 1976 (S 76040).

Mickey Mouse 1963 (S 63010) – 1974 / 1978 (S 78032).

Minnie Mouse 1972 (S 72388).

The Phantom Blot 1968 (S 68048 – S 68193).

Pluto 1963 (S 63082) / 1971 (S 71343).

Super Goof 1968 (S 68074) / 1970-72 (S 72416).

The Three Little Pigs 1976 (S 76141).

Uncle Scrooge 1963 (S 63103) – 1968 (S 68118).

AN ALL-NEW GOLDEN AGE
SPENCER SPOOK
ADVENTURES
BUT, I THOUGHT WHAT YOU WANT MOST IS GOOD, OLD-FASHIONED ADVENTURE!
OH, DON'T YOU? WELL, I'LL SHOW YOU ADVENTURE!
NO, SPOOK! NOT THE BOSS!
NO, SPOOK! NOT THE BOSS!
TAKE IT, BOSS!
JACK BRADBURY
DAVE SEARLE
ALAN HANCE
WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED! IT'S THE LEGENDARY "LOST HOME COUNTRY" OF THE LITTLE GUYS!
WE'RE GOING DOWN TO MAKE THE CHILDS' DREAMS REAL!
SOMEHOW, SOMEDAY, SOMEWHERE, WE'LL ALL FIND OUR CLIENT CAME TO US ALL BY HIMSELF! AND WE'LL ALL BE AMAZED AT HOW SMALL THEY ARE!

D) Children's Books

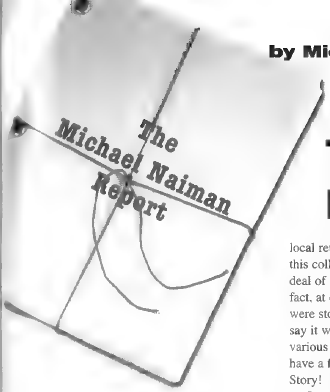
Note: This list only includes storybooks, although Bradbury illustrated eight coloring books and ten tray puzzles and jigsaw puzzles, some of which reutilized comic book one-pagers.

A Big Golden Book (Simon and Schuster, 1951) Bugs Bunny's Book #472 (pencils only, color art by Campbell Grant).

A Big Little Book (Whitman, 1968) Goofy in Giant Trouble #2021 (pencils only, inks on interior art: Steve Steere). Reprinted as #5751 (1973/74/77/78), #5751-1 (1979) and #5751-2 (1980).

Tell-a-Tale (Whitman, 1954) Bob Clampett's Beany: Cecil Captured for the Zoo #904 (pencils only, color art by Gene Wolfe).

by Michael Naiman



The Petrified Butter Collection

All collectors know the thrill of the chase and the payoff of the acquisition. Along with those two factors, there is another component of comicbook collecting that has been sadly overused and abused.

How many times have you heard the story of "The Collection from Grandma's Attic?" Can that be The Most Familiar Comicbook Story Ever Told?

It seems that every time a new collection surfaces, those responsible for finding the books make up some of the most farfetched, exaggerated stories of their "discoveries." These folk should seriously think about writing for comicbooks (or at least new fairytales!)

The PT Barnum hucksterism (under the not-so-subtle guise of "Marketing") that goes into promoting these usually most ordinary books borders on the phantasmagoric! The sellers attempt to weave their Mystic Tales in hopes of snaring an unsuspecting gullible new purchaser who is tempted to overpay for this "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity that "may-never-come-this-way-again!"

Many of these tales find their root source of mythos from the legendary Mile High saga. To this day, there are still off-springs of the Mile High discovery—Mile High II, III and now even MH IV, which originated under our noses here in San Diego! According to the local retailers who sold many issues of this collection to the collector, a great deal of the key issues are restored. In fact, at one time, many of these issues were stolen from the owner (some even say it was an inside job) and surfaced at various retail outlets. Paul Harvey would have a field day with The Rest of the Story!

Some of the best ones are what I'd categorize as the "Lonely Hermit-type" stories. Of course, who can forget the Salida discovery of Bruce Ellsworth in the Colorado area? I did see the pictures of the run down outhouse-looking cabin that housed those famously white-paged books. The story of the Lonely Guy who amassed these books while living the life of a recluse is touching.

But, the Granddaddy of them all has to be the recent find in The Cabin-In-The-Woods completely untouched for years with #1 issues abounding. I call this discovery the Petrified Butter Collection. Why So? Apparently everything was so perfectly preserved that time stood still not causing anything to change—including a stick of rock hard butter! Sheesh!

Giving a pedigree or identifier to collections will continue to be a part of the hobby. A pedigree should probably be able to hold up by itself without the shameless promotion that has attached itself to so many of today's new finds. But, as long as people buy into the promotion, there will be those who continue to promote. Caveat emptor.

• • •

Recent sales of note: *Action* #4 (detached cover almost complete spine split with nail hole through most of the pages) $1377; *Action* #7 (restored) $1350; *Superman* #1 (no cover, complete) $1525, #14 FN/VF $1300; Alex Ross *Original Seven* litho $1225; Warner Brothers Gold and Silver Superman Shield watch (Fossil) $1050; Atari 1979 Superman pinball machine $810; 1940

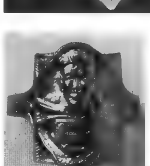
ILLUSTRATIONS ARE NOT EXAMPLES SOLD

Superman wristwatch by New Haven Clock & Watch Co. NM in box $660; Superman statue (11 inches tall) by Randy Bowen $700; Superman 1960s flicker ring set (6) by Vari-Vu $600; Superman 1940 enameled gum brass badge $500; Aurora Superman/Superboy model kit MIB $500; Robert Toner Superman porcelain doll MIB $450; Superman

and boat) in original box with accessory packet containing instructions, rocket and badge $1135; *Batman and Robin* (1997) throwing bird movie prop (aka Batarang) limited edition $700; *Batman* TV prop (1966) Shakespeare bust $610; Batman Corgi 267 Batmobile MIB $516; Batman 8 inch motorcycle (1960-Argentina) $405; Batman lunchbox by Aladdin $373; Batman

1942 Town Talk Bread die cut figure (4 inches tall) $413; Superman 1954 Adco-Liberty lunch box (VG/FN) $390; Superman statue by Warner Brothers (2 feet tall) $340; Superman Topps 1965 complete set of 66 cards $255 and $200; Superman 1940 Defense Club milk bottle cap $222; Superman 1938 Crusaders Ring $200.

Batman Returns Batmobile (1989) $195,000; *Batman Forever* pinball machine by Sega $2050; Batman 12 inch figure by Astro Toys MOC (Argentina) $1025; Batman (Adam West) and Robin (Burt Ward) statues (12 inches tall) $860; *Batman Forever* latex costume $1240; Batman Corgi GS3 gift set (Batmobile



inflatable punching bag (1968) in original box $255.

And for those of you who flip out when I mention Disney items here are a few of the rare Whitman copies: *Uncle Scrooge* #179 CGC 9.0 $405; *Donald Duck* #222 CGC 9.4 $394; *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* #480 CGC 9.0 $150; Don Rosa's *Life and Times of Scrooge McDuck* signed hardcover $511.

Comic Book Marketplace

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CBM Market Watch

A report of market indicator sales (including % of Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide) by Michael Naiman

Action
#33 FN $230 44%

Adventure
#275 VF $41 55%

Adventures into the Unknown
#11 GD $21 75%

All-American
#53 NM "$1125" 1.07X

Amazing Adventures
#11 NM $346 2.3X

Amazing Spider-Man
#9 VG $83 43%
#15 VF $255 47%
#19 VF $205 74%
#20 VF $270 70%
#25 VF $185 80%
#87 VF- $19 44%
#114 VF $17 50%
#137 VF/NM $26 46%

Astonishing (Atlas)
#52 FN $26 62%

Authentic Police Cases
#25 VG+ $61 98%
#27 VG $45 73%
#28 VG $44 71%
#33 VG $29 1.11X
#36 VG $47 1.8X

Avengers
#22 VF $45 82%
#23 VF $35 83%
#55 VF $25 86%
#82 VF/NM $10 37%
#83 VF/NM $15 45%
#99 NM- $12 34%

Batman
#18 VF "$1150" 66%
#174 VF $32 58%
#180 VF $20 36%
#251 VF $40 75%

Conan
#4 VF $30 66%
#11 VF/NM $35 63%
#13 NM- $25 56%

Crackajack Funnies
#33 FN $125 80%
#40 GD $49 1.23X

Daredevil
#1 FN $440 80%
#11 VF+ $40 70%
#11 VF+ $47 82%
#15 VF/NM $41 54%
#20 VF $22 52%
#25 VF+ $20 66%
#44 VF $10 50%

Detective
#34 VG $660 72%
#55 FN $200 45%

Eerie (Avon)
#2 VG+ $87 65%

Famous Funnies
#6 GD $152 1.06X

Fantastic Four
#2 NM "$3950" 72%
#24 VF $88 70%
#26 VF $300 97%
#30 NM- $130 74%
#34 VF/NM $45 41%
#43 VF $60 94%
#44 VF/NM $60 55%
#54 VF/NM $60 82%
#81 VF $18 60%
#82 VF $25 83%
#82 NM $35 70%
#84 NM $29 58%
#87 VF/NM $16 39%
#89 NM- $30 75%

Fighting Yank
#25 GD $20 38%

Flash
#127 FN+ $20 50%

Forbidden Worlds
#1 VG $230 76%
#6 VG+ $79 82%

Frankenstein, Monster of
#2 VF/NM $20 69%

Ghost (Fiction House)
#1 VG $71 50%

GI Combat
#114 VG+ $20 77%

Green Lantern (SA)
#86 NM $73 86%

Guns Against Gangsters
#4 FN $20 27%

Harvey Comic Hits
#51 VG $89 1.43X

Harvey Hits
#6 FN $88 1.63X

Incredible Hulk
#115 VF $16 46%

Journey into Mystery
#106 VF- $31 44%
#109 NM $163 91%
#14 NM- $250 54%

Jumbo
#12 VG $175 71%

Military
#3 VG+ $350 77%

Mister Mystery
#3 VG $59 52%

Our Army At War
#4 VG $56 58%
#18 VG+ $76 1.23X
#19 VG $34 55%
#26 VG $22 50%
#86 FN $40 53%
#91 GD $26 50%
#118 FN $20 66%

Perfect Crime
#26 FN $129 1.72X

Planet
#48 FN $134 73%
#51 VG $60 50%
#53 VF $180 47%
#70 VG $106 1.1X

Prize Comics Western
#88 VG $16 57%
#90 VG- $11 39%
#92 VG $13 46%
#95 VG $19 68%

Richie Rich
#12 VG $64 2.66X

Richie Rich Billions
#1 FN+ $25 2.04X

Richie Rich Dollars and Cents
#30 VF $26 1.3X

Richie Rich Gems
#1 FN $16 1.29X

Richie Rich Millions
#1 VG $88 2.31X

Richie Rich Vault of Mystery
#1 FN $22 2.39X

Sad Sack
#33 VG $34 4.25X
#57 FN $21 2.33X
#69 FN $11 1.17X

Silver Surfer
#10 VF/NM $26 34%

Smash
#15 GD $124 Guide

Space Adventures
#12 FN $150 85%

Space Western
#45 VG $101 1.17X

Speed Comics
#17 VG $431 2.95X

Spellbound
#17 VG $26 54%

Spooky
#15 VG $10 71%

Star Spangled War
#15 VG+ $20 48%
#101 VG $10 50%
#112 VF+ $22 31%
#144 FN+ $28 1.33X

Strange Tales
#126 VF $28 62%
#165 VF $15 50%

Superboy
#2 FN $650 1.11X

Superman
#76 VF/NM "$2175" 1.45X
#117 VF $61 30%
#199 VF/NM $214 86%
#246 VF/NM $15 60%
#272 VF/NM $17 46%

Suspense
#7 VF- $104 61%
#19 VG $28 58%

Tales from the Crypt
#35 VG $51 67%

Tales of Horror
#2 GD $20 59%

Tales to Astonish
#2 VG $46 41%
#26 VG $27 71%
#36 GD $47 89%
#71 NM $52 87%
#99 VF/NM $14 29%

Thor
#133 VF+ $20 44%
#149 NM- $30 46%

Tower of Shadows
#1 VF $20 48%

Weird Science-Fantasy
#28 VF $78 33%

Weird Tales of the Future
#4 GD $125 1.06X

Wings
#2 FN $192 67%

World of Suspense
#3 VG $20 42%

World's Finest
#162 VF/NM $45 1.36X

X-Men
#33 VF/NM $75 80%
#45 NM- $50 48%
#57 VF $34 53%
#60 FN+ $34 1.26X
#94 VF/NM $385 53%
#96 VF/NM $50 43%
#104 VF/NM $50 89%
#108 VF/NM $30 32%
#110 VF/NM $35 63%
#111 VF/NM $30 54%
#130 NM $30 55%
#139 VF/NM $30 75%

Dan Lewonczyk

DUCKS-R-US
ducksrus4u@aol.com

Springtime is the slump season for the online market. Winter is good because people are indoors. As soon as the good weather hits, people are outside as quick as possible, playing softball, cleaning their yards, planting gardens and whatever they do to keep them away from their computers. We in the online Comic Book Market experience a slowdown between March and June each year. BUT! As soon as it gets hot, people are driven inside again, back to their air conditioners and, more importantly, to their computers and the online competitive bidding we dealers love!

Most dealers I know are experiencing a serious slowdown in the market. Same goes for myself with two exceptions. We are more and more moving toward a global market not only in commerce but in *comics* too! I recently sold a group of comics individually on eBay, from what I will call the "Exceptional Comics Collection." To protect the source of the collection, which I have not finished buying from yet, I cannot divulge the source. However, sales on eBay for Disney comics from the early 1950s to 1984 in FN+ (6.5) to NM (9.4) from this collection sold from 50% to 150% of *Guide*! With sales in the VF to NM range selling at *Guide* to 1.5 *Guide*!

Secondly, we are slowly but surely losing what I will call our "Great American Comic Book Heritage" to worldwide collectors, especially from Europe. With all the distractions for us and especially our children, we are continuing to lose our new comics sales and most importantly our back issue sales to overseas buyers! Movies, TV, video games, D&D, magic games and other interests have taken a front row seat over and beyond Comic Books!

Not so in Europe and Australia/New Zealand! More than half of my Disney comic book sales go to Europe and other countries! We've fallen quite a ways since the 1950s in respect to supporting the Great American Comic Book market. We have failed ourselves and *especially* our children. Within ten years at this rate, most of our Disney comics and others will be in overseas collections, except for a few hardnosed diehards!

One choice note of interest is that *Uncle Scrooge* remains my best seller, with a continued interest in Whitman issues. The most requested issues remain #179, 181, 198, and 175, with #198 being the most requested recently, and a NM sale going to Europe for $100. I've seen an increase for sales of *US* #40 to #50, confirming the smaller print runs of the early Gold Keys compared with the huge runs of the Dell Comics!

Barry Branvold

Barry's Collectors Corner
1911 S. Washington
Grand Forks, ND 58201
UNDBKB@aol.com

Comic stores these days really need to sell more than just comic books. I have always sold supplies for which everyone will always have a need—bags, boards, boxes and similar supplies are a steady seller. Along with that come other peripheral sales.

HeroClix has a made-for-comic-store product with both Marvel and DC game figures. Some people are buying these game pieces to play the game while others collect them as painted figures. Older comic fans remember the Aurora models of, among others, Spider-Man and Superboy, which were advertised on the back covers of comics. These eventually led to action figures of Marvel and DC characters. Collectors now have miniatures of a wide range of characters for display or playing the game. You do not need to worry about keeping them in the bubble pack like action figures, because there is no bubble pack. HeroClix continues to expand on the selection of figures available. There is also a collectible aspect with rarer figures and those that are more common. For game players the collectible aspect comes from gaming needs, for the pure collector there is the need to complete the run on desired figures.

I was at first reluctant to carry these with the slowdown of D&D sales. I would recommend them to any comic store now. The company also has a good promotion department and rewards system for acting as a venue for playing the game. I am in no way affiliated with HeroClix; I simply like what they have done for my recent sales.

Scott McAdam

Treasures of Youth
8418 Greenspoint Dr.
Rowlett, TX 75088
972-463-7011
smcatoyguy@aol.com

Hi from stormy Texas. Since relocating from the Bay Area of San Francisco into the Dallas metro area it has become increasingly difficult to find quality comics for resale. This is, of course, mostly my fault because I have not placed the proper ads and done the digging that I should be doing.

I have managed to get a few good things to sell in the area. I just got a little stash of 87 comics from 1970 that had been left over from a closed drug store in Benton, LA. Most of it was junk (11 copies of *Jimmy Olsen* #128 mostly in VF+), but there were 5 copies of *Green Lantern Green Arrow* #76 that should sell very well once I market them. I was dreaming of super-high-grade books that would all be "slabable," but alas only one is even nice enough to consider because of the prohibitive cost of this procedure. It would definitely come back a 9.0 or possibly a 9.2. I made a nice buy, for me,

of 413 nearly-all Dell Comics from 1954-1960, with a few DCs. I have managed to sell a few on eBay and at the show in which I purchased the comics. In Oakland, CA, ironically enough. I sold a *World's Finest* #86 in GD for $22; I sold a few Zorro *Four Color* comics in G/VG for $15 each; I sold a Crusader Rabbit (#1) *FC* #735 in G/VG for $35, *Jackie Gleason and the Honeymooners* #1 (DC) GD $80 ($87 in GD) on the BUY IT NOW on eBay. At Wonder-Con I sold *Plastic Man* #2 VG (*Guide* $340) for $240, but had been carrying it around for a couple years and was happy to get the money for it. I sold three pieces of artwork at Wonder-Con: a Carl Barks color preliminary of the Non-Disney painting "The Pied Piper" for $1070 to a very happy collector. For its size and the fact that it had been in color I thought this was a great bargain. But after several tries in auction catalogs and on eBay, I needed to find a happy home for this treasure that had been in my collection for many years. A Gil Kane page from "The Ring of Nibelung" sold for $200 and a nice color George Tuska cover-like re-creation, that Mr. Tuska had brought to San Diego back in 1999 or 2000, of The Mighty Thor for $200.

I wish I had more to tell about this fabulous industry that I love so much. After nearly 28 years of living and loving comic books I still dream of that "Treasure of Youth" collection that will make me rich and famous like so many other pedigree originators. But before that happens I will probably have monkeys fly out of my butt.

Dave Sincere

Sincere Comics, Inc.
4667 Airport Blvd.
Mobile, AL 36608
store: 251-342-2603
sincerecmx@aol.com

It's time once again for a report from down South. So, everybody sing: "X-Men are hot, hot, hot. Oh, yeah baby, they're hot, hot, hot." OK, stop the music, now for the report. As you can tell by my theme song, *X-Men* back issue sales are soaring. Not only are we selling single issues of the recent books, but we're also selling Silver and Bronze *X-Men*. Here's a list of sales in Silver Age: #2 2.5 $300, #3 2.5 (with writing on the cover) $60, #4 4.0 $86, #5 5.5 $125, #7 5.0 $39.99 (with penned-in date mark), #14 5.5 $75, #19 8.0 $100.

In the *New X-Men*: Two *Giant-Size* #1 6.0 $399, 8.0 $599.99, two copies of *X-Men* #94 5.5 $299.99, 6.5 $350, first Phoenix #101 9.0 $126, first John Byrne #108 8.5 $56.

All of the above books were sold on the Internet. All the other *X-Men* between #102 and #112 are going for around $25-$50 in 8.0-9.5. The books from #113 to #140 have been closing on eBay between $9.99 and $25, with the majority of them hitting in the $9.99-$15 price range. I've been selling #142 and #143 at $20-$25 consistently. The *X-Men* sales on eBay have been 35% of my total sales on eBay since mid-March. There hasn't been much in store sales due to the slow economy here in Alabama.

I know, it's hard to believe, but I have managed to sell some comics other than *X-Men*, and so, now for the rest of the (non-X-Men) report. Other recent sales on eBay include *DareDevil* #1 (signed by Stan Lee) 2.5 $300; *Silver Surfer* #1 4.0 (signed by Stan Lee) $85.

On the low end, we've been selling lots of sets of low-grade Silver Age DCs for $2-3 per book. The Marvel Silver Age is selling for $3-6 a book. There has been a slow-down for us in Archies and other kiddie comics from the '70s. Last year we were able to sell these for $1 a book, now we're lucky to get 25-50 cents a book. I'm going to guess that most of the people looking for these have filled their lists in the last three years. I've been having success with various Gold Key comics like *Mighty Samson* and *Ripley's Believe It Or Not*. These seem to be moving for $1-2 a book in low grades.

Moving on to some newer things, it seems that the sale on new comics has finally stabilized. I'm hoping that we'll see an upward trend later on in the summer with the Hulk movie coming out. DC and Marvel's main-line titles seem to have stabilized. *Batman*, with Jim Lee art, is still selling out on a regular basis. Also, what's up with cutting Wonder Woman's hair?? She's had long hair since she was just a piece of clay!!

John Paul

Pug Productions
Clifton, NJ Comic Book Expo
Wayne, NJ Comic Book Expo
10 Cross St, Montclair, NJ 07042
973-783-0608
PUGPRDCTNS@AOL.COM

Interest in comics here in Northern NJ is as strong as ever! Attendance at our two monthly shows is steady, and customers are buying! One of our shows was on Mother's Day. While dealer attendance was down, we had just as many customers as usual. Our other show was on Memorial Day weekend and actually had a 50% increase in attendance.

Most of our dealers report a strong demand for all the "hot" titles: Jim Lee's *Batman*, Bruce Jones' *Hulk*, Marvel's Ultimate line and the "flavor of the month" Vertigo and Max titles. Sales of the new *Captain America* run have slowed greatly. I've heard more than one customer refer to it as "Captain Anti-America"—perhaps that has something to do with it? *Daredevil* sales are much better than a year ago, but have dropped quite a bit post-movie. Sales of Silver and Bronze *Amazing Spider-Man*, *Incredible Hulk* and *X-Men* are all strong. Overall, sales of Marvel and DC Silver in all grades are moving nicely. The X-Men movie far exceeded expectations, and has definitely brought in some new collectors, as well as re-enervating some older ones. But, the new "Manga" look on the current *Uncanny* has turned off *many* fans. Apparently, Marvel has never seen a bandwagon it

didn't want to jump on.

We do seem to have an increasing number of fans that collect for scarcity. Some base their selections on the Gerber volumes. Inaccuracies aside (there have been a few "warehouse" finds since they were published), they do a fairly good job of reflecting scarcity. Of course, a high number Gerber can often be out of the price range of your average collector. As a result, many are seeking either comics that Gerber underrated, or comics from the 1950s to the '80s that are nearly as scarce. A few that have sold at our shows this past month are: *Archie's Pal Jughead* #90 (1962) VG (This issue has an incredible cover featuring Juggie selling drugs! It's *much* scarcer than the sought-after *Jughead's Folly* #1) $75 (12.5x *Guide*!); *Dennis The Menace* #1 (1953) GD+ (Very tough book!) $150 (1.9x *Guide*); *Ka-Zar The Savage* #12 (with demonbirth panel) $20 (3.3x *Guide*); *King Kong* (nn Whitman Treasury 1968—the *first* comic book in this format, and scarcer than the *Rudolph* nn!) FN $45 (3x *Guide*); *Manhunter, The Complete Saga* (1979 Excalibur Enterprises TPB reprinting the Goodwin/Simonson classic) VG/FN $25; *Mod Love* #1 (YES, it exists! It has a tacky Pop Art cover. And, of course, I forgot to save a scan before I sold it.) VG/FN $25 (3x *Guide*).

And of course, here's a sampling of some of the other items sold at the shows.

Platinum Age: *Gulf Funny Weekly* #282 VF/NM $65, #284 VF $50, #309 NM $50; *He Done Her Wrong* (Early Graphic Novel - no DJ) VG $90

Golden & Atom Age: *Action* #89 FN $240; *Batman* #18 VG $425; *Big Town* #15 FN $40; *Captain Marvel* #62 VG $60, #80 VG+ $150; *Captain Marvel Wheaties* VG/FN $200; *Frontier Fighters* #1, 5 & 8 VG $150 for all; *Nickel Comics* #8 FN $475; *Spirit* Section 6/9/40 (#2) FN $150; *Superman* #45 VG $150; *Superman* Scrapbook (cover VG, interior pages tan, w/ newspaper clippings pasted in) $200; *Unseen* #5 FR/GD $25.

Silver Age: *Adventures Of The Jaguar* #1 FN+ $62; *Amazing Spider-Man* #50 VF $375; *Avengers* #2 FN $150; *Boris Karloff Thriller* #2 FN $14; *Incredible Hulk* #102 FN $32; *Nick Fury - Agent Of Shield* #1, 5, 6 & 7 avg VF+ $200 for all; *Showcase* #13 GD $325; *Star Spangled War* #154 VF $75; *Uncanny X-Men* #20 VF- $60.

Bronze Age: *Incredible Hulk* #182 VF $55; *Mister Miracle* #4 NM $30, #5 NM- $25; *Spirit World* #1 FN- $8; *Superman* #300 NM- $22; *Uncanny X-Men* #96 NM- $92, #108 FN $16.

Modern (1980-Present): *Amazing Spider-Man* #30 NM $20, #36 NM $10; *Fables* #2 NM $20; *Incredible Hulk* #34 NM $35, VF $15, #35 NM $40; *Saga of Swamp Thing* #21 NM $25, #37 NM $29; *Ultimate Spider-Man* #2 (car) NM $50, #2 (bldg) NM $25; *Wolverine* #1 (Mini) NM $60.

Original Art: Matt Baker (*Classics Ill* - Lorna Doone page) $325; Hildebrandt Bros (Marvel Trading Card, large and tight pencil rough - Wolverine) $150; Jack Kirby (Black Panther page) $200; Roy Krenkel (small male figure sketch) $75.

Bruce Edwards

Quasar Comics and Collectibles
PO Box 2227
Louisville, KY 40201
www.QuasarComics.com
Bruce@QuasarComics.com

Good day and happy collecting everyone! There are a couple items I continue to notice in the market today and I look forward to reader comments to this magazine or directly to me regarding these topics.

1. eBay - Sellers with reasonable terms, good feedback and, most importantly, clear auction presentations with good size, high quality scans/photos within the auction description realize consistently more than other sellers. Even sellers who meet the first two of the noted factors but do not offer decent descriptions and high quality images consistently realize less than those who offer all three. Yet the majority of sellers do not meet all three factors. Why? On a side note—eBay continues to make it more time consuming to provide all three. Their "Turbo Lister" software, for example, is much more resource intensive than their no longer allowed "Mister Lister" software and forces sellers to do multiple clicks (with waits while the new window comes up) to generate an optimum listing. There is no reason for eBay to make their software less user friendly in order to implement their fee for a delayed listing that "Mister Lister" effectively provided for free. I have to ask, why gradually make sellers less likely to use eBay when a good number of them have other effective means to sell comics?

2. The gulf between collectors and dealers who cater to these collectors and investors and dealers who cater to investors continues to widen based on feedback I have received. This gulf, which is expressed in the difference in customer service and attitude of investor oriented dealers towards collectors continues to amaze me and does not bode well for the long term health of the market. There are plenty of other long term negatives (demographics of the collector for example) without attitude playing an unnecessary part. Now, this gulf may be real or it may be only perception. Even if only perception among some collectors, we all need to take a look at ourselves and honestly ask if we are contributing to this perception and do what we can to not be part of it.

Continued interest in collector oriented conditions and titles is readily apparent on eBay. Of course, with the gargantuan number of comics listed on eBay, great deals are to be had every day. Here are a few example sales: *Amazing Story of Measurement* (1949) VG/F Digest size promo unlisted in Overstreet $20.50; *Don Winslow of the Navy* #54 (1948) FA/GD $8.38; *Gabby* #8 VG $3.95; *Gay Comics* #18 VG $74.95, #37 GD $18.95, #40 VG $24.95; *Leave it to Binky* #21 FA $4.25; *Linda Carter Student Nurse* #9 VG $10.45; *Love and Marriage* #14 FN+ $24.95, #16 VG+

$20.51, #2 VG+ $9.06, #3 VGF $16; *Love Confessions* #46 VG $4.95; *Love Experiences* #1 (1949) VG/F $10.45; *Love Secrets* #34 VG $6.95; *Loveland* #1 VG $25.38; *Lovelorn* #3 VG+ $8.45; *Lovers* #24 (#2) VG+ $19.49, #34 (Glossy) VG $14.95, #50 VG/F $8.49, #63 (Sep '54) VG $9.95, #70 VG+ $4.95, #75 VG $9.95; *Range Romances* #2 VG $16.02

That's it for now. Comic collecting is a great hobby. Collect what you enjoy!

Steve Wyatt

supercon@winfirst.com

Hello everyone. Well, let me tell you, I have had the best two months in years. Silver and Bronze are very strong. I had my best single show at Wonder-Con, and then my best Motor City show ever this past May. I only sold one CGC book at the show, a G-S *X-Men* #1 (CGC 8.5 VF+) for $750. I was questioned, "Why so low? It's CGCd." Well, the whole point is to be able to sell it at "*Guide*" with the third party grading, isn't it? Anyway, Marvel Silver was selling the strongest.

Here are some notable sales I wrote down just for this: *Amazing Spider-Man* #2 G+ $300, #4 G+ $200, #5 VG $300, and I sold a copy of every issue between #10 and 20 (all in F/average) at *Guide* without discounting them; *Avengers* #7 VF-$120, #11 VF $200, #16 VF $110, and multiple copies in the teens (all in F to VF average) all at full *Guide*; *Iron Man* was strong with a #1 F+ going for $200, 3 #5s all in VF for $60.

Hulk was another strong seller for me. I started the Wonder-Con with 3/4 of a long box of High Grade *Hulks* from #102 to 200, and have, maybe, 40 left. Mid to high grade *X-men* were also (and as usual) very good sellers. I sold a #9 F+ $120, 2 #10s in F+/VF for $200 ea., multiple copies of the Neal Adams issues (all in VF average) at *Guide*, about $65 each, and 2 #95s in NM for $150 ea. Other strong Marvel titles selling were *Nick Fury Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.*—3 #4s in NM all sold for $60 each—*Journey into Mystery* and *Strange Tales*. I have to mention *Daredevil* too. WOW I can't forget this title. I sold a #2 F+ for $200, #3 F+/VF $200, #7 F+ $120, #16 VF $100, and about 5 #12's all VF for $60 each.

DCs were also good sellers, but it was DC Bronze that sold best. I must have sold every copy of the DC $1.00 comics (not the square bound, the '70s 68 pagers) I had in stock—at least 100 issues. Also *Supergirl* (3 #1s all in NMish for $40 each) and *Teen Titans* (#4 VF $50, #8 NM- $50 and multiple copies of the Adams issues #20-22 all in VF to NM for full *Guide*). And, as usual, higher grade *Detectives* and *Batman* were very strong.

A few other notable sales at these two shows were *Terry and the Pirates* #1(Harvey) F+ $150; *Undersea Agents* #1 VF+ $75, #2 VF/NM $60; *Dynamo* #1 VF $70; *Science Comics* #1 G $250; *Venus* #3 VG $120; *Noman* #1 NM $100, and #2 NM $60.

I could go on with single prices, but there are too many of them. I want to note that all the books sold came out of one collection I picked up this year, and got multiple copies of high grade Silver Age Marvel and DCs. So I will be tracking sales and letting everyone know how this is going—and remember to Read Your Comics!

Patrick Marchbanks

Golden Age Comics and Games
PO Box 8822
Gulfport, MS 39506
Phone: 228-860-0256
Fax: 228-896-5472
goldenagecbc@aol.com
www.GoldenAgeCollectibles.com

At the time of this writing we in the vintage comic book marketplace are just settling in with the latest edition of the *Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* in which Bob and the crew did yet another fantastic job. In reviewing both the *Guide* itself and recent feedback about this year's *Guide* almost everyone I have spoken with felt it was a great decision to include the VG 4.0 and VF/NM 9.0 pricing columns. Along with the changes to the pricing section of the *Guide* the book also features a larger page size and many revisions that set this Overstreet apart from the ones from the past and makes for what I feel is the best edition to date.

Other items that are important to point out is that this time of the year we are on the verge of several exciting events including the Wizard World Chicago Comic Con, upcoming Heritage Signature Auction, the San Diego Comic Con and the arranging of the very first Las Vegas Comic Con to be held over this years Halloween weekend. All of these events hold magnificent prospects for everyone who is involved in the comic industry.

Now of course it is time to move along to what is selling, who is buying and where they are buying from. In the last few months I have received a large increase in the number of requests for high-grade *X-Men* and *Spider-Man* Silver Age material. So much so that the majority of the books that come in almost immediately go out to fill clients' want lists and the ones that do end up on our website are quickly sold and usually for several times *Guide*. In the world of Golden Age, books have been selling well also. Timely and EC books sell quickly and consistently in any grade. DC Golden Age buyers seem to be focusing on books in FN 6.0 or higher. The focus of clients wanting only the higher grade DC Golden Age is most likely due to the abundance of lower-grade material that has been available over the past year. All of the Golden Age sales that we have completed in the last few months have realized prices above *Guide* for books of practically any grade.

Books that are encapsulated by CGC and graded 9.4 or higher are almost always sold first, however, even raw material, provided that it is high grade, quickly disappears from our inventory. While sales from our website remain very consistent, online auction sites

(primarily eBay) have recently been fluctuating more then they have in the past. The majority of these fluctuating prices do of course center on books that have not been encapsulated by CGC. Prices being realized for non-encapsulated books vary so much it can be very difficult to gauge what to expect from any auction that contains raw material. On the flip side of this, almost every eBay auction that contains books that have been graded by CGC will realize a price of at least *Guide*, with books being graded VF/NM 9.0 or better always receiving a premium price.

The next area of the market to be reviewed in this report is that of restored books. As in the past, only Golden or Platinum Age books that have been restored seem to realize a respectable price, and even with these books it is always best that no more then a moderate amount of professional work is done to a book unless you are dealing with a valuable or rare piece. The majority of restored books that we have sold over the last few months have been Timelys with slight to moderate restoration, realizing prices of roughly half of the unrestored *Guide* value of the book.

In a quick closing summary, the vintage comic book market continues to be very active in all areas. Conventions and auctions (both live and Internet based) continue to be profitable for both sellers and buyers. An amazing amount of fabulous material has become available for sale over these last few years and the result has been a continued upswing in realized sale prices, vintage comic investors, new collectors and a revived interest for many individuals. It is a truly fascinating time to be involved in this market. Also I would like to let everyone know that if you have not yet made plans to attend one of the major shows of the year it is truly something that should not be missed and I hope to see many of you at conventions throughout the year.

Recent sales: *Amazing Spider-Man* #30 CGC NM 9.4 $1,000, #42 CGC NM-9.2 $400, #61 CGC NM 9.4 $300; *Doctor Strange* #169 CGC NM+ 9.4 $875; *Superman* #4 App. VG+ $700; *Tales of Suspense* #39 VF- $1,950; *X-Men* #1 CGC VF- 7.5 $4,000, #23 CGC NM 9.4 $675, #25 CGC NM 9.4 $675.

Greg White

Comics and Collectibles
Kissimmee, Florida
WEMISSWALT@aol.com

I believe the back issue comic book market to be in serious trouble. The vast majority of current interest is sparked by investment potential and driven by sadly misguided 'advisors' who care much more about making a buck than they do about the hobby in general. No gimmick or hype can ever take away the pure enjoyment I receive from re-reading my vintage books. I have complete runs of most DC, Timely, Marvel, Dell and Archie right back to 1938. I feel sorry for the collector who has yet to purchase these books and the sad state that he is facing today. Hopefully the future will bring some semblance of a more responsible marketplace.

Welcome to early summer in Central Florida. Hot, humid and lots of rain! Sales have been steady if not spectacular. Silver Age Marvel and DC still lead the way. The lower grade books sell well while the more expensive high-grade copies have a problem finding a home due to higher cost—most collectors simply cannot afford books in the $1000 and up range. As usual we have had to discount certain titles and groups of comics. As I have stated in the past the overall price structure still needs to lower in order to improve across the board sales.

Silver Age 1955-1969 Marvels in the GD/FN range moved well this month. *Amazing Spider-Man*, *Fantastic Four*, *Journey into Mystery* and *Tales of Suspense* sold well. We were also able to purchase a 1960s Marvel collection that included every super-hero book from late 1962 to 1969—a mid-grade group that will help to fill out our Marvel selection. DC books sell in spurts. One week *Batman* will move, the next week it will be another title. Overall DC sales are decent but a bit behind Marvel this month. Charlton, Gold Key, Harvey and other similar brands are slow as usual.

Sales: *Tales of Suspense* #41 VG $200; *Amazing Spider-Man* #2 VG $400, #17 GD $50; *Fantastic Four* #3 GD $195; *Batman* #110 GD $25; *Strange Tales* #57 VG $40; *Detective* #230 GD $50.

Golden Age 1935-1955: Kind of quiet this month. We picked up a run of early *Batman* but that was about it. Most collectors cannot afford the better Golden Age comics. Demand was light this month. I am seeing more and more restored books from this period. We really need to address this issue with a price listing and general information in the next *Guide*. Not all books would be listed—lets start with key popular issues and go from there. The time has come.

Sales: *Batman* #43 GD $150; *Archie* #60 VG $22; *Batman* #61 GD $95; *Superman* #12 FN $500; *Action* #19 FN/VF $1500; *Four Color* #9 FA $350.

Art, Toys & Disneyana: We bought a large vintage Disney collection this month. Lots of early Disneyland items and 1940s-1950s cartoon and movie pieces. These items have always had a good sales record for us and we should do well with this group. Demand continues for 1960s TV and comic character toys. We do not see as much of this material as we could use. We did get in the 1966 Aurora Batman model kit. I also get requests for original art but have had little offered to me in recent months. We are ripe for a quality vintage collection.

Sales: Hulk Aurora kit in box $350; Disneyland 1958 guidebook $30; *Flintstones* cel $100; Capt Action doll loose $95.

That will wrap up our month. We look forward to seeing everyone in San Diego. Have a great month!

Opinions expressed in CBM *"Market Reports" are solely those of the individual dealers and collectors who contribute them. Prices vary by location, date of transaction and other factors.*

Mickey Mouse Weekly

[continued from page 33]

featuring all the Disney characters in existence at the time. Dell expanded on this concept in its Disney books a decade or so later, when many of its Disney stories featured Disney characters intermingling with one another even though their continuities were different; for example, Chip and Dale with the train Casey Jr., Bambi with Snow White's wicked witch, Clara Cluck and Jiminy Cricket, etc.

By the 1940s, Mickey was no longer the dominant force, being edged out by the increasingly popular Donald Duck. Subsequent covers continued to feature Donald and his family as lead characters.

The magazine continued into the '50s but its format changed to the standard comic book format. By then the quaintness and dynamic covers of the early run had disappeared, although there remained a smattering of original British-created Disney strips.

The publication folded in December 1957—perhaps due to local readers' unfamiliarity with the smaller size, or maybe a readership which was switching to other fads, but more likely a combination of the two, as the world entered a brave new world inspired by the dawn of rock and roll music.

Certainly, *Mickey Mouse Weekly* was a remarkable magazine that, to use a tired cliché, was certainly ahead of its time.

For a measly twopence, kids could get laughs and thrills, a magnificent-looking magazine with lovely color pages, regular updates on the latest Disney releases of the time (for example, a movie review of *Dumbo*) and a fan club to which they were encouraged to contribute, winning sundry bits of Disney paraphernalia as a reward. Collectors' items these, surely!

MERBABIES
Here is the Story of one of Mr. Disney's Most Beautiful Cartoons, Featuring the Gay and Irresistible Frank Thomas!

Mickey Mouse Weekly's serialization of the "new" Merbabies characters (actually named the Water Babies in the Disney short).

Today there's probably no country in the world that hasn't had a Disney comic published or sold there. But none of the versions can even come close to the originality and innovativeness of *Mickey Mouse Weekly*, and it remains a hidden treasure waiting to be discovered by Disney collectors.

Disney's The Robber Kitten guest stars in an episode of Shuffled Symphonies.

Dan Viets Interview

[continued from page 21]

House in Marceline, and that is almost certainly where Walt saw his first films. The Opera House at Disneyland is more ornate, but there is no question that the inspiration for it is Cater's Opera House in Marceline.

RC: Is Cater's Opera House still standing?

Viets: No, unfortunately it burned in 1957, but that's also where Walt most certainly saw a production of *Peter Pan* starring Maude Adams, the great American actress from the turn of the century. That experience inspired him in later years to make a feature length film of that story.

The town square section of Disneyland is based on what's known as Ripley Square and is often now called Ripley Park. For instance there was a bandstand and a gazebo where Walt recalled seeing brass band concerts. When he designed Disneyland he included a bandstand to be the centerpiece of the town square. He later moved that to a different location in the park. You will also find that there are two-wheeled mounted cannons on either side of the flagpole that's in the center of town square of Disneyland. Turns out that in the days when Walt lived in Marceline there was a very similar wheel-mounted cannon in Ripley Square, although it has long since disappeared. When you look at the old photos it's very clear that is something that a young boy would have certainly fixed on and been fascinated by.

I found some articles about Teddy Roosevelt visiting Marceline on a train trip. Marceline was a fairly isolated community, but it was on the main line of the Santa Fe railway, and so they would have business from people like Teddy Roosevelt and Maude Adams and major national names. So it was a rich environment for Walt. Walt lived on a farm, but that farm was just on the north edge of town, so he had the best of both worlds.

Dan Viets is an attorney in Columbia, Missouri, a collector of Disneyana, especially items from Walt Disney's roots in Missouri.

by Michelle Nolan

The Beginning of the End of the Golden Age

Contrary to the myth all too often popularized over the past 30 years, 1945 was not really a year of shrinkage in the still-fledgling comic book industry.

Several comic book icons first appeared in comic books dated 1945—Millie the Model, Katy Keene, The Fox and The Crow, Superboy—with more notes to come about them later in this essay.

To be sure, the year that World War II ended was not a period of comic book expansion. The total number of comics issued in 1945—1,131, give or take a couple that may not exist—was a record, albeit only eight issues more than appeared in 1944.

Moreover, purists are sure to point out that the 1,051 comic books issued in 1943—the first year in which the total hit four figures—doubtlessly contained more pages than the marginally greater numbers of issues produced in 1944 and 1945. Most 1943 comic books consisted of 68 or 60 pages (including covers), while almost all the issues for the next two years dropped to either 52 or 36.

Not even Dan Stevenson—the remarkable indexer who provides much of the statistical data for my columns—knows how many pages there were in the comic books of any given year. There is no doubt, however, that the total page count, and therefore the work available for writers and cartoonists, dropped from 1943 to 1945.

Of course, the total number of experienced creators available to work in comics fell in an even greater proportion, since so many served in the military during those years. Meanwhile, paper rationing did, indeed, help to shrink the total page count.

Nor are accurate total circulation figures available. Nevertheless, prices for most comics remained a dime, so publishers may well have made more money in 1945 than 1943, since they had to pay less for stories and art.

By the by, in view of the consistently skyrocketing prices of comics over the past 25 years, it seems difficult to believe today that the same 10-cent price prevailed during the first 27 years in the history of the modern newsstand comic book (1934-61). In contrast, most pulp magazines went from 10 cents in the 1930s—the decade of their absolute heyday—to 25 cents in the 1950s, when thousands of pulps still were published before almost all of them rather quickly vanished or morphed into digests. But then, pulp publishers did not cut their page counts in half the way the comic book people did, at least until those less-glorious digests appeared.

Intro strip to Katy Keene from **Wilbur** #5 (Summer 1945).

How many Baby Boomers, reared with the 36-page comics of the 1950s and '60s, found themselves awestruck and feeling a bit cheated the first time they handled a 68-page gem from their parent's generation? For me, it was a 1940 issue of *King Comics*, and I couldn't help lamenting, as a 10-year-old, that dimes just weren't going as far as they did before I was born.

1945 was, however, definitely a year of transition—the beginning of the end of the Golden Age. Even though super-heroes still abounded, and most of the significant original costumed heroes were still very much in evidence, only two successful new super-hero titles debuted that year.

Both of those titles, Fawcett's *Marvel Family* and *Mary Marvel*, featured familiar characters from the Fawcett stable. Oddly, both first issues were thin 36-pagers dated December 1945 but the second issues of each did not come along until June 1946. Even so, they still rank as the only commercially successful costumed hero titles to debut in 1945.

For the purpose of argument, by the way, let's define "successful" as a run of at least 24 issues. Using that definition, only 14 of the dozens of new comic books produced in 1945 were successful. Most of these were humor titles, foreshadowing the demise of most costumed heroes and particularly the super types from Timely/Marvel and DC.

In 1945, Timely first issues appeared for *Millie the Model* (which ran 207 issues), *Patsy Walker* (124), *Nellie the Nurse* (36) and *Georgie* (39).

That year, there were DC debuts for *Real Screen* (138 issues), *Buzzy* (77) and *Leading* (63, with the funny animal #15 taking over from the costumed hero version of *Leading* in the first of many DC transitions to come). Archie debuted *Suzie Comics* with #49 and it lasted until #100 in 1954.

The only other successful debuts in 1945 were a potpourri: Harvey's *Joe Palooka* (which ran 118 issues), Fawcett's *Nyoka* (which actually debuted with #2 and ran through #77); Crestwood's *Frankenstein* (32 issues) and Parents Magazine's *Calling All Kids* (26 issues, expiring with the company's comic book line in 1949). The first issue of *Nyoka*, entitled *Jungle Girl* and adapting the Republic serial *Perils of Nyoka*, was a 1942 one-shot.

IF YOU KNEW SUZIE LIKE WE KNOW
SUZIE
SPRING
comics
ALL I KNOW, BOYS, IS I BROUGHT UP A JAR OF VANISHING CREAM TO HER ROOM!
HOTEL MANAGE
Early Archie Series, **Suzie** #49 (#1) (Spring 1945).

The primary reason so many comic book historians have mistakenly interpreted the effects of paper rationing is that many publishers dropped the frequency of their titles from monthly to bimonthly, or bimonthly to quarterly. That distorts the historical picture and leads many to figure there were fewer comic books, period.

In fact, in 1945 there were no fewer than 28 monthly comic books, defined here as those with at least 10 issues that year. They were all well established titles by 1945 except for Timely's *Miss America #2* (Nov 1944), the title became a monthly fun and fashion anthology for girls aimed at competing with Parents Magazine's highly successful and groundbreaking *Calling All Girls*.

Even though *Miss America* #2-5 each contained one Miss America tale, the title represented one of the earliest transitions from a super-hero title to something else, again foreshadowing the 1949 fates of the far more famed *Captain America*, *Human Torch* and *Sub-Mariner*.

Fawcett definitely suffered from paper shortages no matter how many times its staff shouted "Shazam!" at the printers. Fawcett published numerous monthly titles before and after 1945. But that year, even *Captain Marvel*—which some say was the best-selling comic book of the 1942-43 period—ran only nine issues, as did his flagship title, *Whiz Comics*. In fact, no Fawcett title ran more than nine issues in 1945.

All 28 monthly titles in 1945 were anthology titles, even Street & Smith's *Shadow Comics*, which had two Shadow stories in nine issues and only one Shadow tale in three issues. And in another foreshadowing of the end of the Golden Age, *Shadow Comics* was among only eight monthly anthology titles with costume heroes as cover features in 1945.

Classic period piece by Alex Schomburg, **Thrilling Comics** #50 (Oct 1945).

It's interesting to note that six of those eight titles featured most of the few costume heroes to make it into the 1950s with their own titles as well—*Superman* (Action), *Batman* (Detective), *Wonder Woman* (Sensation), *Blackhawk* (Military/Modern), *Plastic Man* (Police), *Dollman* (Feature). Other than the Shadow, only The Guardian/Newsboy Legion (*Star Spangled*) were gone by the end of the 1940s.

It's true that a few other costume anthology titles, such as *Adventure* and *Flash Comics*, returned to monthly status after 1945. Even so, it's stunning to realize that even as early as 1945, only the most enduring of super-heroes made the covers of monthly anthologies.

Those 28 anthologies, with more that 300 issues among them, represented more than one-quarter of all comic books published in 1945. On the other end of the spectrum, Dan Stevenson's remarkable issue-by-issue database reveals that there were a whopping 44

publishers who produced seven or fewer comic books that year, accounting for only 119 issues. In contrast, DC Comics published an industry-leading 141 comics, including those in the companion All-American line, which DC absorbed that year.

Just imagine, for the magnificent sum of $14.10, you could have bought every new DC comic book in 1945! Even considering an inflation factor of roughly 10 to 1 that translates to only $141 in today's dollars—less than $12 per month!

Without a doubt the most enduring character introduced in 1945 was Marvel's Millie the Model, although I'm partial to the late Bill Woggins's incomparable Katy Keene, who debuted in *Wilbur Comics* #5 (Summer 1945). Katy and her wonderful fashions appeared in hundreds of stories in a variety of the Archie Series titles for 16 years.

DC's Buzzy, one of the funniest and most successful of the Archie knockoffs, first appeared in his own title in 1945, but his debut came a year earlier in *All Funny comics*. Archie was only two years old and had appeared in only a couple dozen comic books when Buzzy debuted in 1945, meaning it didn't take DC long to catch on.

Like Buzzy, Patsy Walker, whose own title debuted in 1945 and lasted a little more than two decades, was another enduring character introduced in 1944. Patsy, second only to Archie and Co. in teen title circulation, first appeared in *Miss America* #2 (Nov. 1944).

The most commercially successful character to be technically introduced in 1945—Superboy in *More Fun* #101 (Jan/Feb 1945, which of course hit the stands in 1944)—was also the last major costumed hero to debut during the Golden Age. It's difficult to believe that DC apparently thought so little of Superboy's debut that he was the only character not plugged on the cover of the comic!

For anyone who wants to see how a character's conception can change radically since the 1940s, compare Superboy's 5-page debut in *More Fun* with the Smallville television show. It's nothing less than mind-boggling! One might as well contrast cave paintings with computer art.

Superboy notwithstanding, many fans will vote for DC's hysterically funny The Fox and The Crow as the most memorable characters to debut in 1945

THE COMIC MAGAZINE THAT DARED TO BE DIFFERENT
DAREDEVIL
LEV GLEASON PUBLISHER · CHARLES BIRO AND BOB WOOD EDITORS
EXTRA
Evening Times
DAREDEVIL AND WISE GUYS SMASH BLACKMARKETEERS
DAREDEVIL
CRIMEBUSTERS HAVE BUSY DAY
Smashing black market crime, **Daredevil** #32 (Sep 1945).

comics. They were apparently a huge hit right from the start in *Real Screen* #1 (Spring 1945), and the dyspeptic duo appeared for more than two decades, including three different DC titles during 1952-54.

It's also fascinating to note that, perhaps because of the war, Lev Gleason's groundbreaking *Crime Does Not Pay* title did not yet have imitators after three highly successful years on the stands. In fact, no other comics were published that year that began with the word "crime." The closest thing to *Crimes Does Not Pay*, in fact, were Gleason's two hero titles, *Daredevil* and *Boy Comics*, featuring almost as much gore as their sensational brother title.

Many of the 1945 super-hero stories, of course, turned to crime themes with the demise of the German and Japanese war machines. But a plethora of genuine crime comics had not yet hit the stands—and horror comics did not yet exist.

In some ways, then, 1945 also represents the last year of relative innocence in the comics.

In addition to the 44 minor imprints referenced above—some of them may have been owned by the same company—24 more significant publishers published anywhere from DC's 141 issues to 14 by Harvey (soon to become a major player in the field) and Columbia. Whew—68 newsstand comic book imprints!

Among the publishers listed with a single contribution to the comic book kingdom of 1945 was EC comics, with the first issue of *Picture Stories from American History*, following the sale of Max Gaines's All-American line to DC. Who could have suspected that *Picture Stories from American History* would be the beginning of a comic book company that, perhaps as much as any other, truly made history?

Seldom has a single year produced so many truly obscure comics—*Atomic Bomb*, *Bee 29 the Bombardier*, *Cannonball*, *Cavalier*, *Dolly Dill*, *Federal Men*, *Front Page*, *Gem*, *Hi-Lite*, *Hurricane*, *KO*, *Komik Pages*, *Meteor*, *Topsy Turvy*, *Twinkle* and *Zoom*, to give proper alphabetical due to a few of these rarities.

Paper allotments, worker shortages, financial follies—they all played a role in the erratic nature of so many 1945 titles.

By 1946, most comic books were back on their regular publishing schedules and the field bloomed to 1,548 issues—better than a 33 percent increase in just one year. But that's another year and another story… ◆

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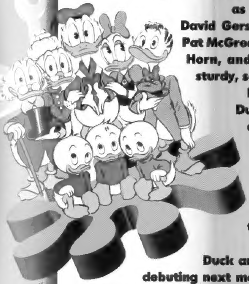

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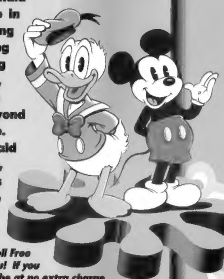

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